B1-B9 Starts

[F7](main10) 001 - Who wants to be a [Baker]? [F7]10)

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A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Check out my other story!

[shoutout_link L1,L2]

Max refused to piss himself while waiting in line. He went before he left, of course, but his whole life had come down to a god's whim, and now there were twisting needles running from his bladder down into his balls and up into his gut. He couldn't piss himself. Not with his family with him and the whole town watching. Waiting to see what the gods chose for him.

Max was still thin. Weathered from working with his dad on the sheep farm. The smell of lanolin never quite left his clothes and hands. He wanted to smell like bread and have a life with Nancy.

After hundreds of hours of kneading, folding, and rolling out dough, he should unlock the [Baker] skill. The gods chose, though, and he knew he might get something different. Being human meant Max was most likely to end up with a skill that dealt with growing things or making stuff.

Or you could be one of the chosen few pushing back the front lines against the monsters and other sapients- an adventurer. But he could still taste Nancy's kisses on his lips, taste the apricot jam she put in the cookies, and he could smell the flour on her hands and the bread baking in her ovens. He could hear her pledge echoing in his ears.

He *would* be a baker. They would wed as soon as his apprenticeship was done. Their parents had already informally agreed to their courtship, but they couldn't formalize it until he learned his skill. His skill was going to be his life. And it was in the god's hands now.

"*Please don't let mine suck like that one did*, Max pleaded in his head as he heard the guild advisor shout out [Shepherd] for the young man who had just gotten his life's path chosen for him.

Max fervently began praying again as he waited in line behind the people before him.

Once a year, the adventurer guild brought the skill shard to each town, allowing everyone who had turned eighteen since their last visit to see what skill they would be given.

It had been four months since he turned eighteen, yet every day since the last time he had been here, all he could think about was getting the [Baker] skill. Since Nancy had received that skill last year, he wanted nothing more than to spend his days making things with her.

“Your sister is hoping you get something cool like swordsman or caster,” Caleb called out from behind him, breaking his train of thought.

Max shuddered at that thought as he heard Caleb start to chuckle. His body couldn’t stay still as the chills kept running through him at the thought of being an adventurer. It was hard to stand still between the need to piss and the fear of being a fighter. Not one to admit his cowardness, he preferred to be a lover and not a fighter. Or at least he had told Nancy that a thousand times.

Thankfully, only one out of every twenty humans was given a skill worthy of being an adventurer. Each race had different chances for skill selection, yet it seemed harder for the human race to receive a skill that gave them the adventurer path. No one knew why the other races were most often gifted with combat skills. Perhaps the gods were still punishing humans for the wars of the past. Most would be merchants, craftsmen, and workers.

“You still planning on joining the [Baker’s] guild?” Caleb asked as he nudged Max in the back. “Your sister told me you already had the initiation fee saved up.”

“Just like you are praying for the [Warriors] guild,” he shot back over his shoulder. “None of that really matters as long as we both end up with something. I’m just glad no one has been an *unskilled* this year.”

Ignoring the shiver that ran through him, Max glanced at the families lining the street, ignoring Caleb and his teasing. For the last mile on both sides of the road were all the townspeople and nobles with children who had turned eighteen, each in their best clothes, waiting to celebrate whatever skill their child received. Formal dresses, simple outfits, full-on suits, and the fancy getups the nobles wore were on display. Cheers were given when a child was bestowed with a skill that would give them a promising job and future. Loud applause and celebration could be heard for minutes when a person acquired a combat skill. Thankfully, no one had experienced the worst response today. The cries and wailing from a family when a child was led away after being listed as unskilled was a horrible thing he had only experienced twice.

Max ran his hands along the pleats of his best outfit, knowing there were no wrinkles since his mother had pressed it about a dozen times. He was trying to wipe the sweat that kept forming on his palms.

He spotted his sister, Stacy, off up ahead with his parents, standing on her tiptoes and smiling at him as he waited his turn. She wore that pink dress she loved because she caught his friend Caleb ogling at her when she wore it. The long hours she spent practicing with the town guard were evident by the muscles and shape of her body. He found himself smiling, knowing next year would be her turn. Her dream of being an adventurer and conquering the towers and dungeons since they were kids might finally come true. Thinking about that caused him to fidget in line.

I just want a skill that makes life easy. Please, gods, hear my prayer. No blacksmithing or farming. [Baker]!

His mind ran back to when he had gone to the temple and given a small offering the day before. The priests had laughed when they asked what he was praying for. Helping his father work all those long days caring for sheep had taught him he didn't want a job like that. The smell and constant noise had driven him crazy. Something indoors, perhaps a job crafting jewelry or even in a bank, would be okay if a bakery wasn't an option.

Most importantly, something without risk.

A loud roar of cheers snapped him out of his thoughts. Someone just got the [Scout] skill! He didn't recognize the boy up there, but Max could only imagine how jealous a few of the others in line would be. Too many people seemed to think a life of adventure would be grand.

Letting his mind wander to take it off the call of nature that seemed to overwhelm him, Max thought about how each child had to work in different trades from the age of thirteen. Exposure to all these things was believed to give them a better chance of success and the skill they desired. Nothing had ever really piqued his interest until he met Nancy and tasted her pastries. Glancing up at Phillip, who was still celebrating, he grinned, remembering when it was his turn in the blacksmith's forge had come up. Being sweaty and dirty was not his idea of a good time, so he had always found a way to leave early and relax elsewhere.

A push from behind came, and he turned. His best friend Caleb was smiling from ear to ear like a fool.

"That guy is so lucky. The [Scout] skill can set one for life," Caleb groaned as he pointed at the next person moving to the stage. "I don't know that one. Do you?"

Checking out who Caleb was talking about, Max didn’t recognize the well-dressed guy, but he knew it had to be a noble. The clothes he wore were far nicer than his. They were far nicer than most of the kids in line.

A sapphire blue suit with long tails in the back and those shiny black shoes made it easy to point out the difference between haves and have-nots.

“I’d bet he gets something cushy like the rest of them,” Max stated before groaning after hearing what the boy had received. “How the heck does that happen?”

“*Will of the gods*.” joked Caleb as he whispered his reply.

“[Administration] and [Banking]!” shouted the advisor once more to make sure everyone had heard. A huge grin ran across his face as he held the boy's hand in the air. The red robe that he wore almost matched the color of his face as he shouted.

Thunderous applause echoed across the courtyard and street as the crowd recognized the rarity of two skills.

Thunderous applause echoed across the courtyard and street as the crowd recognized the rarity of two skills.

“That’s like one in a hundred thousand,” hissed Caleb as he clapped his hands out of obligation. “Damn nobles! Always with the crazy crap, I swear the gods listen to their prayers more than ours, or something is off. It’s always like that!”

Max bobbed his head as he saw the blond-headed teen raise his hands toward the crowd. Two skills were almost unheard of. Everyone believed different things about how it appeared certain nobles always got better skills or the occasional double skill. The truth was only the nobles seemed to know, and they sure weren’t sharing.

“I guess we need to offer more to the temple if we want two skills,” mumbled Max as he frowned at Caleb. “That like sucks all the joy out of everyone else. Why not put that guy at the end of the line?”

He knew Caleb was nodding as they turned to watch the last six before him wait their turn. He searched the crowd and saw Nancy by his sister's side. Her green eyes were watching him, and he smiled. The combination of her red hair and yellow dress almost took his breath away. He would have stopped there and stared at her forever if Caleb hadn’t begun beating on his back for him to keep moving. She gave him a wink and blew him a kiss. He felt a smile running from ear to ear on his face when he noticed the basket she held in her hand. She had made celebration treats!

Please let me be a [Baker]! I’ll give twenty percent of all the money I make!

Unsure if his prayer was even heard, his foot almost tripped over the steps leading to the stone podium in the town center due to his lack of attention and how his legs seemed to be failing as he clenched his pelvic muscles tightly.

Caleb’s steady hand grabbed the back of his shirt, keeping him from falling over and looking like a fool before the entire town. Shaking his head, Max forced himself to focus. Now was not the time to think about eating desserts with Nancy.

“You’re dancing like you're going to piss yourself or pass out!” Caleb snapped at him from behind.

Looking over his shoulder, Max glared at him and saw Caleb start to chuckle.

Caleb’s head motion forced him to turn around, and he realized he was standing on the base of the platform. Looking forward, he saw the five representatives watching and waiting to see who might be given a skill worthy of their time. The back four looked half asleep as they stood almost motionless in their red robes. Their faces were blank as they gazed at the back of the only one actively doing anything. Even with their expressionless faces, something about them screamed danger.

An older man with maybe one hundred grey hairs on his head and enough wrinkles to prove he had seen a few things called out the skills as they were revealed from the shard. He would smile at every teen who came forward and whispered something before making them put their hands on both sides of the crystal shard.

Each time, the shard would change colors before it finally settled on one shade of something, and then somehow, the older man would get a notification in his status screen, telling him what they had been given. Over the years, Max had seen him laugh, tell jokes, and even encourage the teen who had received a skill they did not want. The few times an individual had received no skill, he had quietly ushered them away to one of the four who were standing behind him.

Turning again, Max smiled at his parents, sister, and Nancy, waving and cheering for him.

“Please step forward,” the man informed him in a deep and precise voice. He flashed a toothy smile. “What is your name?”

“Max Hoste,” he replied, his voice cracking and making his face flush.

“No need to be worried, my boy,” the man stated with a wink as he motioned to the shard. “You have seen this done hundreds of times. Simply come close and put your hands on both sides and let's see what the gods have gifted you!”

Taking a deep breath, Max nodded and took the two steps required to approach the shard. As he prepared to put a hand on each side, he paused, noticing the courtyard was quiet. It never seemed quiet when anyone else had done this.

“The shard,” the older man whispered.

Bobbing his head, Max snapped out of the fog he had been in and put his hands on the clear shard of crystal.

It felt warm and smooth. Almost slick like ice and yet somehow warm like a fresh cake.

The shard began to flash dark colors before turning black and staying the color of night with no light.

Max glanced up from the shard, having never seen it this color before, and noticed the older man looking at him and the shard with a puzzled look. His eyebrows were raised, and one eye was cocked at him.

The other four behind the old man had lost their blank looks and were now staring at him and the shard.

If the courtyard had seemed quiet before, it was now like a graveyard as everyone waited to hear what this different color meant.

“What does your status say, boy?!” the older man exclaimed. His voice was low but gruff and able to strip off bark off a tree when he leaned in. “What skills do you have?”

Noticing the look on his face and how his two white eyebrows had become one, Max wasted no time checking.

Skills?

[Status Check]

*****

Max Hoste

18-Year-old Human Male

Level 1

Exp 0/1000

HP: 40/40

MP: 20/20

Stamina: 20/20

STR: 3

DEX: 4

CON: 4

INT: 4

WIS: 4

Skills:

Baker

Consume

*****

Max felt his chest suddenly become lighter than he could believe as he stared at the small status window he had summoned. It had been unlocked since he was thirteen, but nothing had ever shown up before besides the first two lines.

Now, there were two skills listed! [Baker] and something else he had never heard of.

What in the world is consume? Is that a skill to help him test food?

Smiling, he considered how cool that would be if it helped him grow as a renowned tester of some kind.

The sound of fingers snapping broke his shock as he saw old, spindly fingers before his face.

“What skill does it say!” the man exclaimed louder as he waved a hand at those behind him.

“Uh… it says…” Max trailed off as he watched the people moving toward him.

Max couldn’t speak as his voice failed him. His mind was racing, and things were moving so fast. Why were those four coming near him? That only happened when things were bad.

The man's face contorted, and he shook his head from side to side.

Motioning to a woman standing behind him, he whispered in her ear.

Glancing around the courtyard, Max realized everyone was staring at him and that his mother was crying. His dad was holding her back as she reached her hands out toward him and wept.

His sister’s face was white as snow as she stared at him. Glancing next to her, he noticed that Nancy was not there. The basket she had been holding was upside down on the street, and some muffins that he loved were crushed under the feet of those near it. Scanning the crowd, he saw a patch of red hair bobbing and weaving through the crowd, leaving the street.

Turning around, he saw Caleb looking at him with tears in his eyes.

“What is wrong?” Max asked Caleb as his friend pointed behind him.

“Unskilled! Unskilled!” The cry rose from the crowd, and Max turned around, confused as to why they would say that. As he turned, he saw the four people behind the older man moving toward him.

“Unskilled! Unskilled!” the cry echoed again all around him.

“Do not resist, and they will not strike you down before your family,” the older man stated as the men and women surrounded him. “If you fight, your family may die as well.”

Glancing at the older man, Max saw rage and anger burning in his eyes. It was like he had done something evil to this man every day of his life to earn a look like this.

Looking at the other four, he saw they each wore the same expression as the two on his side grabbed his arm and yanked him in the direction away from the crowd, his family, and friends.

“Why?” Max shouted at the four who were dragging him away. “I have a skill! Why…”

A fist, harder than any blow he had ever received, hit his jaw, causing his knees to buckle, and the world began to shimmer.

The woman who had struck him spoke in a hushed tone as they yanked him along.

“Put him in the cart, and we will deal with him once we are gone.”

The cart she was talking about was not that far away, and before they had thrown him into it, he was already lost to the looming darkness that beckoned him.

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

*** Disclamer ***

Book 1, 2 & 3 Is on Kindle Unlimited / Amazon as of 2/23/2024

Due to their policy I have to take down the chapters.

You can read Book 1 - Shattered Dreams on Amazon.

You can read Book 2 - Shattered Limits on Amazon.

You can read Book 3 - Shattered Boundaries on Amazon.

Thank you again to everyone who supported me in this journey!

((updated 7/1/2024))

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/battle-through-the-nine-realms-aadal0cxrhu.jpg?time=1717094504

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/87559/battle-through-the-nine-realms-isekai-litrpg

[L3]

[F7](main10) Book 4 Recap!

[F7]10)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/1661973/book-4-recap;2(x[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:18], [word.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:18],[Wayback_first2025-06-03 15:18], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-03 15:16],[this.word2025-06-03 15:54], [publish2024-06-03 15:00],[this.Last_edit2024-06-03 15:00])Book 4 Recap! - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

The Story So Far

Welcome back to book four, Ultimate Level 1: New Dreams!

Here is a quick recap of the story so far.

Book 1: Max wanted to be a baker but as we know, a mysterious god (or gods) gave him a black skill. He was assaulted, bound and tossed into a wagon, unsure what would happen next. Getting out he took on the alter identity of Seth Pendal and grew stronger, learning that his black skill, Consume, can steal stats if they are higher than his base (unmodified) ones. After picking up a few skills, some good loot and killing a Fanatic Elf in Windsor Wheel (and picking up a sweet skill), Max flees to the next town, Rumstant.

There he finds out quickly he needs to group up, joining forces with Tanila, an elven Mage, Fowl, a Dwarven Warrior and Batrire, a Dwarven Healer. They have some fun, beat a few floors and eventually Max must reveal a little about himself and the power he possesses. They share some about their own secrets and the party gets to work, attacking dungeons, stopping a shade (ok, well they held it off) and working at getting stronger. Max also learns the power of books and knowledge (always read books, especially Ultimate Level 1!).

Book 1 ends with Max sharing that he believes he met a goddess, one that has given him an unfair advantage of better loot and harder bosses and dungeons to fight.

Book 2: Max comes out swinging, upgrading his weapon skill to all melee weapons! They find out dungeons are really giving them some extra love, even locking them in so that they can only escape if they win (or die… but they don’t… or did they?)

Random luck? Curse of the Gods? Strings of Fate? Something leads Caleb to find and follow Max and the old reunion doesn’t go well, causing Max to find out he’s being followed. A little bit of torture and some payback nets him new skills and knowledge about the people seeking his life. Realizing that they may be closer than he thought, Max goes all in, telling the others.

It’s a whirlwind of finishing up a few things, helping Aimee his local baker friend level up and then ditching town as they race off to Peltagow.

As always, Max’s gotta pee and that leads to a massive gain in stats and skills when he’s ambushed at night, killing a host of thieves and killers who came out during the full moon.

Max finds out his sonar skill can help him cheat at some gambling and he takes all the gold he can from the Beaver's Casino, entering the capital with enough cash to stay at a nice place.

Consume and Max have some problems as the skill wants to be a little more bloodthirsty and Max fights it off, continuing the dungeon crawl through the capital.

A bad rare spawn causes Batrire to almost die and left without enough money to pay the bill, Max steps into the Colosseum to try and earn a little gold while not losing his soul.

Some bad stuff happens… people die (not Max) and between killing an Elven Fanatatic and a Nobles son, Max gets out from the fights with almost nothing.

Thankfully Fowl bet everything on him winning and they get enough cash to pay for Batrire's treatment.

Everything is looking up, Max and Tanila go for a walk… love might have been in the air until they are surrounded by elves ready to kill them both.

With no where else left to turn, Max gives in, letting Consume take over.

Book 3: The elvish group finds out the hard way they weren't prepared for what stood before them. Consume shows Max the power it has and soon he's filled with more stats and skills than one might imagine possible. They get a free ride to the guard place, find out his skill can also remove the killer aura and end up in the city, looking like he didn't do a thing.

They sign up to join the Golden Axe Faction, pledging to be part of that group and begin grinding with haste.

A massive breakout of 4 Dungeons leads to the city being overwhelmed from all sides and the group goes out, barely surviving a massive ogre break. It leads to some growth and they get a chance to see the power of tower climbers who come and save the day.

Between learning they can break the dungeon (Forest Fires can be your friend), winning a drinking contest, celebrating a birthday party and growing closer, the biggest life thing is Max and Tanila finally admitting their feelings.

Upon hitting lvl 50 everything changes. Two options are on the table and the group attempts what hasn't been done in generations. They enter the demon dungeon, hoping to defeat it and earn the boon that comes with it. Flexing their brains they outthink a dangerous area and Max has to let Consume out to save his friends.

After enjoying an all you can eat demon buffet, Max rejoins the group, facing down a demon way stronger than they should have and pull out a win. Avoiding a tricky demon lord they get the boon and head off to the dragon dungeon. (We'll gloss over the epic abilities/spells Max picked up there).

The dragon dungeon is a cake walk. Because the dragon wants to meet the ones who pissed off the demons. A little talk, some quick discussion and Max gets to prove his

value to the dragon, all with the hopes of getting some door prizes. Consume shows up, proving to the lord of the dungeon that he’s worth betting on and picks up a cool dragon tooth, dragon scale and mark (shhh that's a secret).

Now with that done, they pop off to the tower, and unable to resist the chance, go kill a few of the mobs on the first floor of the tower.

Book 4 - Flip the page - Find out.

Current Stats & Skills:

Max Hoste

18-Year-old Human Male

Level 1

Exp 1/1000

Tower Experience: .5%

HP: 1630/1630

MP: 1140/1140

Stamina: 815/815

STR: 161

DEX: 157

CON: 163

INT: 114

WIS: 114

Defense of the Dragon - .5%

Defense of the Demon - .5%

Demon Essence: - 340

Leather Boots - 1 DEX + 5% Speed Bonus while running

Black Quick Pants - 2 STR/DEX +10% Movement Bonus

Ogre’s Black Tunic - 3 STR/CON/DEX + 10% Magic Resist +10% Attack Damage

Black Bracers - 3 STR/CON +15% Damage decrease slashing/piercing

Belt of the Golem - 4 STR/CON +25% Damage decrease slashing/piercing

Scout Spider Helm - 5 STR/CON/DEX. Invisible State, Grants Minor Poison Resist

Cloak of Spider - 5 Dex. Spider Walk - 5 mins / 24 hour cooldown

Green Ring - 1 DEX

Black Rabbit Ring - 2 DEX

Ring of the Golem Prince - 4 CON +25% magic resist

Black Boss Band - 20% Stat Increase

Skills:

Baking – Common

Consume – Epic

Melee Weapon Mastery – Rare

Shield – Rare

Berserker – Uncommon

Elemental Mastery – Uncommon

Stealth – Rare

Dual Wield – Rare

Power Strike – Uncommon

Backstab – Uncommon

Evasion – Uncommon

Archery – Rare

Haste – Uncommon

Festering Touch – Common

Death Magic – Uncommon

Conceal – Epic

Regeneration – Rare

Armored Warrior – Rare

Intimidation – Rare

Dark Magic – Rare

Rampage – Rare

Weakness – Rare

Demonic Magic – Rare

Demonic Summoning – Rare

Demonic Teleportation - Epic

Links

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[L1]

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[F7](main10) Book 5 - Live on Amazon!

[F7]10)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/1878893/book-5-live-on-amazon;3(x[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:16],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:16],[Wayback_first2025-06-03 15:16],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-03 15:16],[this.word2025-06-03 15:56],[publish2024-11-01 14:00],[this.Last_edit2024-11-01 14:00])Book 5 - Live on Amazon! - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1]

It's hard to believe that 1 year ago I sat down after plotting 50 chapters of this story and penned those first words...

Can you believe it? Dang Max and his tiny bladder and desire to be a **[Baker]**!

Now, the story had done far more than I could have ever dreamed of!

Due to the success and all of you, I have managed to pay for my 2 oldest to go to college this year! It's helped me in ways I can't describe and the fact it is still doing so well blows my mind!

Each day I look forward to getting to sit down and continue writing on this story! (Over 40k+ words done in book 7 atm!)

Even better - the webtoon stuff is going strong! Line art is done almost for first chapter and coloring of the line art is starting soon! Super excited to see it come to life (goal is jan 2025!)

Thank you again for how you love on me and my story!

11/4 is coming! Book 6 is a whole new level!

Links

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[L1] https://m.media-amazon.com/images/I/812RaYSAN4L._SY466_.jpg

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0DF5SFJ82

[F7](main10) Chapter 275

[F7]10)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6?/chapter/1884372/chapter-275;4(x[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:14], [word.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:14],[Wayback_first2025-06-03 15:14], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-03 15:17],[this.word2025-06-03 15:58], [publish2024-11-04 15:00],[this.Last_edit2024-11-04 15:00])Chapter 275 - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1,L2]

Chapter 275

We have been caught. Calm yourself—do not react!

Everything inside Max yearned to go wild. His weapon was poised, ready to lash out against the wall in a desperate attempt to free himself from this prison.

Max’s heart began to race, and feelings he hadn’t had since this entire adventure started began to bloom once more.

This is not the wagon! You are not the same boy! Now breathe. Slowly. In and out. We shall get through this. I will help you.

Keeping his eyes closed, he began to breathe as his skill told him to. Each breath settled himself just a little more.

Good. Now slowly walk around the room. Do not touch the wall, but just hold your hands out near the stone. Let us see what our captor has imprisoned us in.

Why not strike the wall? What if I can destroy it?

Think… calm down and think. Inside you is a mind. Use it! Someone who is strong enough to move faster than you could react and to push you through a portal is obviously powerful enough to have built a room designed to hold people.

Right now they may not be certain how strong you are. Until we show our true potential, we will keep certain cards hidden.

His mind was racing with thoughts of Tanila and others. It took every ounce of willpower to not lash out at the wall. His mind had begged him to at the start, but his skill was right.

Slowly, he moved toward the wall ten yards away. His steps made no sound as he moved across the worked stone.

Holding out a hand, Max stopped a few inches away.

That is close enough. Now walk slowly around the room. Keep the same distance.

I'm assuming we are being watched or studied somehow? I don't sense any openings in the stone. It all feels the same.

Which is why you are going to do what I ask. Allow me to use some of my power and knowledge.

Each step felt like agony as Max moved toward the corner. The box felt like it was going to shrink at any moment. Every other step, he took another deep breath, fixing his mind on waiting and seeing what might happen.

After what seemed like an eternity, Max was back at the spot he had started from.

Do one more pass, hold your hand lower, near your knees.

If you say so…

Have you come up with some way to suddenly be free, or does my request seem worthless at the moment?

Forgive me… I'm a little overwhelmed… And thank you for helping.

A sense of acknowledgment came, and Max made a second loop, keeping his hand where he had been instructed.

Once more, with your arm lifted high.

Sighing, Max completed the third circuit and then stepped back.

So what did you find?

There is a barrier of magic around the stone. It won't hurt you to touch it, but I would avoid it just in case. Also I'm not certain we could penetrate it, even with our combined power. My biggest fear lies in the unknown. Something weird is in the aura. It tickles my memory, but I cannot recall why. For now I would suggest returning to the center, sitting down and waiting.

For what?

Eventually your captor will return. Perhaps not in person but in some way or shape. When the right moment comes, we will work on our escape. Until then we bide our time.

Would retrieving a lightstone and reading be allowed?

Most likely that would help the passing of time. You could even pull out a chair, bring a little food. Trust me, whoever has captured you isn't far away. A lot of power and resources went into this moment. For now, rest. I need to rest as well. The shield around us helps me some, not requiring as much power.

Max stored his weapon and shield and then pulled a chair out and set it down in the middle of the room. A small table came next and then a lightstone.

As the warm glow began to fill the area, the reality of his cell hit.

Cold gray stones, each cut twelve inches in length, were set upon each other with the tiniest lines between each one.

Taking a book from storage out, he sat down, opened it, and began to read.

***

One book down.

Setting the finished book on the table, another book appeared in his hand. Jerky came next, and a flask of water. He didn't need to drink or eat as much since his stats had grown, but part of it was to help pass the time and provide a semblance of normality.

The presence is there. Unlike the first four hours with nothing, now I sense the same thing I often felt outside the tower and even at the colosseum.

Just read. If you desire sleep, let me know, and I will keep watch while you rest. For now we wait. Trust me when I say that he will break first. If we play the game as we are right now, whoever is watching, their desire for us to grovel, plead, or beg will break first.

***

Wake up. They are near. Do not react.

His eyes flew open, and Max pulled out the lightstone, setting it on the table.

Across the room ahead of him, a single stone was removed. A pair of silver eyes stared at him, blinking twice as the light went out.

Whoever was watching him, no words came. They just stood there, staring at Max.

Is this now a new contest?

It would appear so. Pull out your book, read. Even if you can't focus on the words, count each word, see how long it takes, and then turn the page. Do not acknowledge them.

It has been three days now. If you weren't here, I wouldn't be able to deal with this. There is no doubt in my mind that I would have gone crazy and attacked that wall with everything I had.

So talking with yourself, even if it is me isn't crazy?

Max laughed out loud, his voice echoing in the room. Smiling, he counted the words and considered what his skill had told him to do.

I think I got this... between you and me I can easily last longer.

***

He's back... it appears he is interested in what I am doing.

I doubt any of his previous guests started creating potions inside their cell. Yet you sit here, smashing up herbs. Creating the fire with a lighting device was a nice way to hide your power.

Grinning, Max stirred the liquid in the small pot he had burning. The stone underneath was prized because no fumes were given off as it heated the liquid to whatever temperature he desired. No tricky flare-ups.

As he worked, watching and adding other ingredients as needed, Max could sense the one watching him shift and their face bunch up, the silver eyes glaring at him.

Slowly, as he prepared to add the green liquid to the potion bottles he had sitting out, a voice radiated around the room.

"You are very different than I expected. Tell me Max Hoste, why do you not seem to care that I have imprisoned you?"

Should I lie?

No… he won't buy that. If he knows who you are, there is no point denying it. For now, play along. Try to get him to talk more. If he does, we win; if he doesn't, we win. Just keep your answers short.

"Not much else to do, might as well be productive."

Silence was the response, and with steady hands, Max filled the bottles, six of them resting on his small wooden table.

[Healing Potion Created x 6]

[6 Experience Gained]

Sighing, he picked them up, putting them into a box that appeared in his hand and stored them all.

Looking bored, he began to put away all of his supplies, then deactivated the heating stone and stored it.

Bringing his chair back out, Max sat on it and closed his eyes.

“Goodnight.”

The person behind the missing block was trembling. The outline of their head wasn’t steady, like normal, but rather it moved just enough to reflect a body that wasn’t still.

Nostrils flared, and Max kept his face blank, letting himself breathe slowly.

Do you want to keep watch? If I fall asleep, it might lull them into a sense of something where a mistake is made.

Laughter echoed inside his head.

It would appear you are learning fast. One should fear being captured by you if you can master it this quickly.

***
“Why don’t you tell me how you feel? I know you are dying inside there.”

Glancing up over the top of the pages of his book, Max frowned.

Those gray eyes lit up for a moment, in anticipation at what he might say.

“I’m okay. Got a library I can finally read through.”

Next to him on the floor were over thirty books, all stacked neatly. Some days, he read one book; some days, he read two. The fact was he had well over three hundred books stored inside. Not all of them were going to be great reads, but every day, the person behind the wall appeared.

A low growl came, and Max looked back down at the book.

They are breaking. That is twice in three days. Each time, something else is revealed.

When do I ask the next question? We’re over two weeks into this.

Do not forget that our lives are on the line. We may only get one chance at escape. If we are not absolutely certain it is our only chance, or if we can succeed, we should not take it.

Rereading the page again, Max knew his skill was right. The clock never stopped ticking, and he had to ignore the knowledge that somewhere Tanila was probably worried sick.

Even worse the idea that the Faction might suffer from his disappearance.

Surely fights wouldn't break out because I'm gone...

You cannot worry about them. Unless you return, nothing matters. Escape first, then deal with whatever may have taken place.

Once more, the companionship pulled Max back from the whirlpool that always seemed ready to draw him under.

We want to bet on how long till they appear again?

No more than a week. Trust me when I say, something about this one is off. I believe he is actually afraid of you. A rare thing for one in his business.

Max glanced up from the book for a moment and saw those same silver eyes locked upon him. He smirked, turning his attention back to the book about food in the elven capital, feeling the person behind the wall almost vibrating with how much they shook.

***

"ANSWER ME! DO YOU NOT FEAR DEATH?!"

Opening his eyes, Max yawned, smacked his mouth a few times, and shrugged.

"No."

After a few seconds he closed his eyes again, sensing a shift in the room.

Be ready. Our chance may come. I will tell you if I think it is there, but if you truly believe there is a moment, know I will give everything I can to it.

Max cracked an eyelid as he turned his head. The stone was changing from solid blocks to stone bars. It was as if someone had cut away four inches in columns. Each bar was four inches wide and ran vertically.

Behind them was another room with a few doors. Yet Max wasn't focused on what he sensed. Instead it was the man who stood before him.

He was thin, his face had a scar from the jaw to his ear, and those silver eyes bored into Max. The sneer on the man's face seemed wrong. Like he was angry and upset with Max for doing something.

Taunt him.

"Well that's a face only a mother could love."

"Who do you think you are?! Do you not realize I could leave you here?! You could die in here, and no one would find your body!"

Make him feel weak. Play into his fears.

"It's true, but I can last years, maybe even more. Judging from this room, you need this place. Which means you need me dead, yet you can't seem to grow the balls to try to make that happen, even while I sleep."

Both of his fists clenched over and over, a crackling noise coming from his joints as he stood there in his simple black outfit.

Looks like you were right… it wasn’t even another week.

His skill began to laugh, and Max smiled, before he took a deep breath and sighed.

“Do me a favor. Either do something worthwhile, let me go, or go away. I’d rather read and relax than listen to you.”

Before he could react, Max sensed a portal underneath and above him.

It’s begun.

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

I know waiting isn't fun but I hope you're ready for a whole new adventure in this story!

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/dao-of-money-xianxia-buisness-aabaved5bhy.jpg?time=1730031991

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/97353/dao-of-money-xianxia-buisness

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[F7](main10) BIG NEWS!!

[F7]10)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6/chapter/2320090/big-news;5(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:14], [word.Waybak=1 2025-06-03 15:14],[Wayback_first2025-06-03 15:14], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-03 15:18],[this.word2025-06-03 17:20], [publish2025-05-31 19:55],[this.Last_edit2025-06-03 13:52])BIG NEWS!! - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Ultimate Level 1 Webtoon![L1]

So some of you will remember me mentioning a webtoon!

The day of its birth is today!

I'd love for each of you to go to the site, sign up if you don't have an account and subscribe (its free) to the webtoon!

This starts another journey for our hero and I can't wait to see it come to life.

Perhaps one day we'll see an anime or a movie and I'll have to announce how greatful I am to each and every one of you!

Thank you again !

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Ultimate Level 1 Webtoon![L1]

ALSO - Book 9 Starts June 7th!

Links

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[L1] https://www.webtoons.com/en/canvas/ultimate-level-1/list?title_no=1059077

[F7](1) Book 9 Uploaded - 1 chapter a day!

[F7]1)
https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2325632/book-9-uploaded-1-chapter-a-day;[F7]06(1[this.Waybak=5 2025-06-09 10:42,=4 2025-06-03 hh:mm =1 2025-06-03 15:16],[word.Waybak=5 2025-06-09 10:42],[Wayback_first2025-06-03 15:16],[Waybak_Last], [this.Fav2025-06-03 15:20],[this.word2025-06-09 11:03],[publish2025-06-02 23:07],[this.Last_edit2025-06-02 23:07])Book 9 Uploaded - 1 chapter a day! - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

I've got book 9 uploaded. It's currently in edits with the publisher so any small things you find, hopefully shouldn't be there upon getting the final versoin.

Currently on a trip with 30+ kids. Even though I quit my job, they weren't going to get to go if I didn't make sure it happened, so I'm out of pocket for the next five days.

June 7th is when the chapters will start dropping!

Thanks again for the support and enjoy it :)

Links

//[2025-06-09 11:03]

[None]

[F7](1) Book 8 out on amazon! Book 6 Audio is out also!

[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2332385/book-8-out-on-amazon-book-6-audio-is-out-also;[F7]07(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:42],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:42],[Wayback_first2025-06-09 10:42],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-09 10:41],[this.word2025-06-09 11:07],[publish2025-06-05 14:53],[this.Last_edit2025-06-05 14:53])Book 8 out on amazon! Book 6 Audio is out also! - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Book 8 on Amazon![L1]

Book 6 Audio[L2]

I just wanted to remind everyone that book 8 just dropped on Amazon! It's hard to believe how much this series has grown and everyday I am pumped to see the same people following the story still! (Some of you have been following since Nov1 2023!)

Even better? Well book 6's audio is out and all I can say is the narration for this one is my favorite! Trust me, you'll know the character who I am going to have to find a way to write and use again because Johnathan killed it!

Thank you again to everyone who supports me and get ready for book 9! It starts this Saturday, June 7th!

Links

//[2025-06-09 11:07]

[L1] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0F4RX9HX5?maas=&ref=

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0DNKQ2BZR?maas=&ref=

B9 START [title] ch474-542

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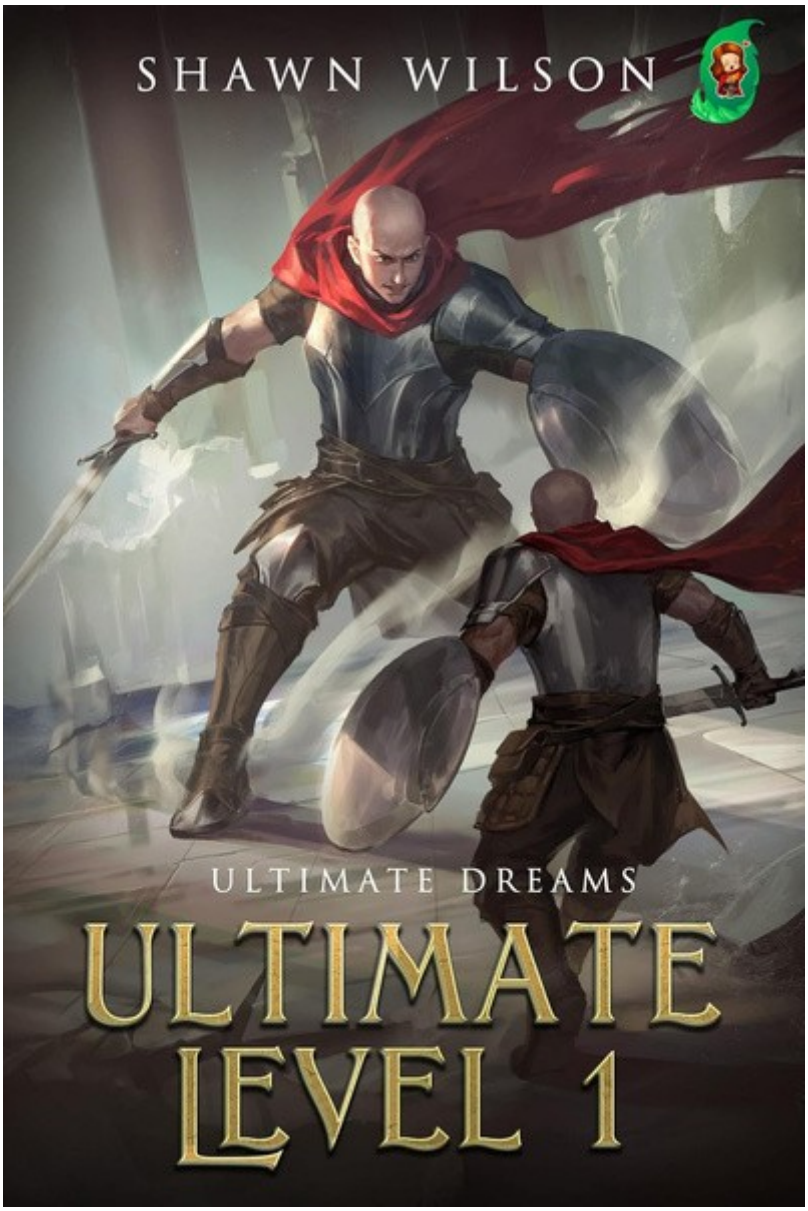

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[F7]1/474 Chapter 474 – Difficult Decisions

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-07 16:00 [2025-06-03 17:25]
[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2337644/chapter-474-difficult-decisions; [F7]2/474(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:43],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:43],[Wayback_first2025-06-09 10:43],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-09 10:42],[this.word2025-06-09 11:18],[publish2025-06-07 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-06-07 16:00])Chapter 474 – Difficult Decisions - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 474 – Difficult Decisions

“This isn’t my fight. Asking me to take part in it puts myself and the remaining dragons on this world at risk.”

Max let out the breath he had been holding slowly.

“I understand. With Rakonath joining me, you may still be in the crosshairs.”

“Far less than if two or three dragons come to aid in a fight that has nothing to do with us. We have stayed away from your kind and the other races after the man whose name you hid behind slaughtered our two greatest. There are fewer than ten of us remaining and all that would do is announce to the world that we are a threat. While you might not care about that, what happens if you survive this fight and go on to defeat the tower? Like all the others who have done so, you will be gone, and I must endure the hatred of a race.”

“I do care, and I am sorry for asking.”

Mucus flew across Aerthen’s lair as she snorted, shaking her head.

“You ask because you care too much. Eventually, you must learn to do what any creature does when its foot is caught in a trap. You chew it off and go through life missing a foot instead of dying because you were too stubborn.”

“That’s not fair,” Rakonath proclaimed. “He offered to help hunt down Kemruss because he knows you won’t leave here and are at risk again.”

A low growl came as the massive red dragon stood to her full height, looking down at the silver dragon, now almost half her size.

“You are too young and do not understand everything. Even with his stats and the essence you gained from the tower, neither of you realizes the risk this quest brings. It would be better if you left her to die.”

“And then what? What happens when they come again? Suppose they get my mother, my sister, or even Tanila? Do I just keep cutting off my feet until I cannot walk?!” Max’s voice continued to rise as he spoke, using his wind magic to hover right next to her snout.

“I will not let people I care about suffer that fate. Just like I will not let you be terrorized by a male dragon who doesn’t understand you are more than a trophy or toy.”

Her mouth started to open, but he held up her hand.

“No more. I asked. You said no, and I cannot afford to spend more time here having philosophical discussions. I’m sure you can tell I am upset, but trust me when I say my mind is clear. Stay here, I will return when I have freed my friend and taken vengeance on those who took her.”

He ended his spell, landing next to Rakonath and putting his hand on his dragon’s silver scales.

“Be safe, Aerthen, and thank you for watching over him.”

[Planetary Travel - Waypoints]

“You know the reason she gave is valid.”

Max nodded and took a few deep breaths, bobbing his head slowly.

“I do. Still, I am grateful you said yes when I asked.”

“There are many reasons I said yes, but the greatest one is that you asked. I knew that you would have accepted my answer had I said no. Even though it would have hurt, I could sense that you wouldn’t have forced me to come. That was one of the greatest signs of how you value me. Just like I know each person coming with you has decided to do so on their own.”

Both eyes were closed, and Max couldn’t help but chuckle. Then he started to get choked up, a few tears running down his cheeks as he struggled to catch his breath.

Bob... I really need you. This rage inside me... I want to give in so badly and need you to walk me back from the cliff I’m standing next to, that I’m ready to jump off of.

“He’s not back yet. I am sorry to hear.”

Scratching the scales on Rakonath’s neck, Max smiled at his dragon.

“You know… I owe W… your father for allowing us to bond. Right now, I cannot express how much you mean to me.”

“Do not worry, Max. I can sense it through our bond. Now let us return to your friends. If what you told me is true, there is not much time to wait.”

***

Everett and Tom stood with his family, watching as Fowl and Batrire climbed into Max’s dimensional space.

“We’ll be back.”

“You better,” Stacy said as she held Callie in her arms. “I swear, if you don’t come back, I’ll find a way to track you down and kick your arse.”

Chuckling, he gave her and his niece each a kiss on their foreheads.

“You’ve grown into a fine man,” his mother said softly. “Who knew we could raise someone as kind as you?”

“I just copied what I saw you and Dad do.”

Tears ran down his mother's face like a small stream, but she didn’t wipe them away.

“Take care, son. We’ll see you soon.”

Giving his father a nod, he embraced them both.

Finally, he turned to where Everett and Tom stood.

“Tell the other Faction leaders I’m not going to make that dinner we planned.”

Laughter came from both men, slightly force,d and each nodded.

“I’m certain they’ll understand. Do you need anything else? Items? Potions?”

Shaking his head, Max pointed at Tanila sitting on Rakonath’s neck.

“We have everything we need. All that remains to do now is find Atheila and save Cordellia.”

Tom put a hand on his shoulder.

“If… for some reason you can’t–”

“I will.”

“Stop, just listen one last time to me. Take one last piece of advice, please.”

Clamping his mouth shut, Max stopped talking.

“If she can’t be saved, do not lose yourself. We all know vengeance. Trust me when I say Everett and I know how it can consume a person. When all this is said and done, come back as the man we know and love.”

Seeing that Tom was done talking, Max held out his hand.

“I’ll try.”

“That’s all we can hope for,” Everett said as he bid him goodbye. “Travel safe.”

Giving one last wave, Max moved to the open dimensional space.

“You two good?”

“Stay in here or sit on the back of a dragon? I’m perfect. Now go find our friend,” Fowl replied. “There’s a blood oath I need to fulfill.”

With a single thought of Max’s mind, the opening vanished, and he vaulted himself into the air, using his skill to maneuver until he was right behind Tanila on Rakonath’s back.

“You ready?”

“No, but remember to let me lead when we get there.”

He nodded.

I’m ready when you are.

Rakonath didn’t say a word, simply launching himself into the air and flying out over the walls of the faction and the city.

“You know they’re going to tell her we are on our way?” Tanila called out.

“I’m betting on it.”

***

He watched as Tanila approached him with some of the food that Batrire had finished preparing.

“You need to eat, even if you don’t need to eat.”

Snorting, Max took it and held it up to his nose, smelling the stew.

“She never ceases to surprise me. Who knew our healer couldn’t cook?”

Tanila chuckled as she sat beside him on the log he carried to their clearing.

“We’re going to be there tomorrow. You need to understand that what happens next isn’t going to be easy.”

“Why does everyone keep saying that? I know it’s going to get ugly and messy. All of us are going to be flagged as murderers, and I’m not sure how long that status will last. So for the tenth time, I know this isn’t going to be easy!”

Every part of him wanted to set the bowl down and tear up the giant trees in the forest they were camping in tonight.

“He's complaining again?” Fowl asked as he arrived with his food. “I was certain we’re done with this conversation yesterday.”

Frowning at his friend, Max grunted.

“Seriously, I’m ready to march in there and burn every part of that city down.” He paused and looked at Tanila, making sure that her gold eyes saw the expression he wore. “Even if it means that innocent people are lost.”

Sighing, she set her bowl down on the ground and stood up.

“Fowl, talk to him… again. Find the man I love inside him, and let him know that I cannot accept that. Somewhere in there has to be the Max who understands that afterward the guilt of his actions would eat at his soul.”

She walked off, leaving the two of them there in awkward silence.

Clearing his throat, Fowl shook his head, seemingly unaffected by Max’s scowl.

“You’re being a real jerk, you know that.”

“It’s Cordellia, and–”

“Yes, the princess has her. Yes, the king and queen are bad elves, but that doesn’t mean an entire nation has to die for their actions. Would you want your entire race to be killed because of something you do? Your sister and her child?”

All his rage and anger vanished as the cold, hard truth of Fowl’s words pierced his heart like a dagger.

Wincing, he clenched his hands so hard and fast that they destroyed the wooden bowl, spraying him and everything within a few feet with stew.

He glanced at Fowl, and both of them started to laugh as Max wiped off the mess with a towel he pulled from storage.

“There’s the man I call a friend and Tanila loves. Use your brains. I mean you got more intelligence points than all of us, maybe put together. You know that we can’t go in there slaughtering children just because they’re in our way. She already warned you that her sister might use them as a shield to prevent you from acting.”

“I know Fowl… I know… It’s just… I promised Cordellia that I would always protect her and treat her like the rest of you. I’m tired of everyone going after the people I love. And with Bob missing… It’s even harder.”

Fowl nodded, took a bite of the stew, and winced. He quickly glanced in Batrie's direction and tossed the contents out before setting the empty bowl on a log and retrieving some food from his storage.

“But you still have us, and we’re here to help you. All we need to do now is make sure that everyone makes it back. Besides, I know what has you scared.”

He could see the frown on his friend's face.

“What is that?”

“Tanila’s father. Him finding out she’s pregnant and that it’s yours.”

Slowly, he nodded, his eyes finding where she was standing.

“We’re going into a den of monsters, and I’m fairly certain I can’t defeat one of them.”

“And that’s why you must trust Tanila to take the lead on this one. Perhaps if you had more time in the tower and if Bob was around you could go in there, kick in the doors and mop the floor with anyone who tried to stop you, but you can’t. So for once, let someone else lead. I mean…”

Fowl cleared his throat a few times, and Max could see his friend chewing on his lip.

“When you joined our party, you still let me lead for a bit and then slowly you took over. It was hard… and… I kinda acted out. Like a fool, I thought if I got better gear, I could maybe take that spot back, but when you were taken from us… I admitted what I had ignored despite knowing it wasn’t true. It was never the gear. You are a natural leader and were a lot stronger than me. Your heart was the only thing bigger than your stats, and I watched you love on Batrire. Right there I knew I could trust you with the most precious gift in my life. That’s why I was honored when we became blood brothers.”

Fowl started massaging his hand, which had been cut for that ceremony.

“Now you need to realize that Tanila is stronger here. Let her lead and know that her heart is in the right place.”

Max nodded and grinned, watching his friend look at him confused.

“What?”

“It’s just that Batrire and Bob are both right. You’ve gotten smarter. Those potions must have given you some intelligence points.”

“Ahh go hump a troll!” Fowl cursed, winking as he gave him the middle finger.

“I’d prefer not to. No telling what they might pass on.”

They laughed, each choosing to ignore what tomorrow held for just a few moments.

Links

//[2025-06-09 11:18]

[None]

[F7]2/475(1) Chapter 475 - Old Memories

[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6/chapter/2339957/chapter-475-old-memories;2/475(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:45],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 10:45],[Wayback_first2025-06-09 10:45],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-09 10:44],[this.word2025-06-09 11:39],[publish2025-06-08 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-08 16:00])Chapter 475 - Old Memories - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1,L2]

Chapter 475 - Old Memories

“My Father… he… for a brief moment of my childhood, he was kinder. Not like Max’s parents are but… less cruel. When I got my elemental mastery skill on my choosing day, he doted on me even. It is a skill that he has, and he spent many weeks talking about all the things it could eventually become.

“I had an older brother who ended up in a fight with Atheila, and she killed him. The reason for the fight was often debated and looking back now I believe my parents forced it.”
“Forced?” Fowl asked.

Nodding, Tanila frowned as she exhaled a deep breath.

“I only say that because, later, as I grew older and stronger, they often played us against each other, but I remember how fast it escalated after… after I killed a servant with my red skill.”

Max squeezed her hand as she took a few quick breaths and reset herself.

“It was the first time I understood how powerful it could be. Even though I was weak at the time, my power, combined with my bloodline, allowed me to dominate elves with ease. There was a period of time where… I took the lives of many servants and at no point did my father get upset. In fact… he often rewarded me with more servants. I… I was on a dangerous path until the day… the day I killed my only friend, Imra.”

A few tears came, and she wiped them away, quickly.

“Like all children, we fought, but I got upset when I believed Imra had shared a secret. She denied it, of course, swearing she would never do so. That was when Atheila came to me and told me that she had heard Imra talking with others and told me what she had said.

“I of course went and immediately confronted her, shouting and yelling. She yelled back and said a few things I now know were only in response to what I said. It was that moment my anger gave in and I unleashed everything, turning off the enchantment that kept my power suppressed and… I murdered her.”

Tanila’s body trembled, and Max put his arms around her, drawing her close. Rakonath moved his tail and laid it at her feet.

For almost a minute, the only sound was Tanila holding back sobs and the fire crackling and popping.

“Two days later, I learned that Atheila had lied. She didn’t even deny it; she was just laughing about it. My mother told me I should fight her and prove that I was stronger.

Enraged and upset I did just that… Even though she is older by a few years, I beat her, almost killing her and stood over her like a victor ready to claim their prize. I… I can see that moment in my head so clearly. In the courtyard, everyone was watching… waiting…

“It was as if they wanted me to take her life. She was strong, but Atheila couldn’t compete with my elemental magic and Mind Reaving ability at that time. She couldn’t get close enough to overpower me physically and as she lay there on the grass, bleeding… I saw for the briefest moment a look of fear. Something I had never seen from her before.

“I… I saw the same look that Irma had. Knowing that she was just a few breaths away from death, and there was nothing she could do. The only thing that stopped me was the look I saw when I heard my mother laughing and glanced at her.

“She was excited, clapping both hands and urging me on. It was then that I recalled what had happened to my brother.”

Tanila closed her eyes and took a deep breath, held it and let it out slowly.

“It was that moment I bent down, grabbed my sister’s shredded dress, and spoke to her for the last time. I told her that I wasn’t going to kill her, but that if she ever did something like that again, I wouldn’t hold back.

“My mother was furious and my father seemed disappointed. Something changed and after that day the little bit of love I believed he had for me vanished. I… think it was that what he saw in me before then was someone who might become like Riniya. An elf that would go on to do stuff for Thuyja and not care who she hurt or murdered. I know he saw that I wouldn’t be that person and that… changed everything.”

Clearing her throat, Tanile wiped away the last few tears that appeared and regained her usual strong posture.

“Not long after, I left home and found these two dwarfs, lost and confused and needing some help.”

Batrile and Fowl each chuckled.

“That we did dear, that we did.”

“But we’re not here to talk about that. I know we need to understand what my Father has power-wise. Beyond the elemental magic, he has the power to command people. I’m unsure if it works only on elves, but I remember him meeting with humans and dwarves once and getting them to do whatever he wanted. He’s strong… far stronger than one might think is possible. Similar to Dagon. And his mind is sharp.

“Tacticians in the kingdom rarely ever came up with anything he hadn’t already seen or thought of. I know he can use different weapons from bows, swords, spears, and daggers. Watching him fight back then was impossible to follow, and it makes me think that he is most likely a match for you stat-wise at least with his gear and equipment.

“What about your sister?”

She shrugged.

“Her skill is like yours in some ways but takes only the physical attributes. She doesn’t gain abilities, but she can become incredibly strong. Whatever she is now…

she’ll be an opponent that focuses on melee combat. With all the time she’s had to go around and harvest people, there is no telling where she could be.”

“And you believe she is past the 50th floor in the tower?” Max asked.

Slowly she nodded.

“One thing she desires is to be the chosen one of our Father. To do that requires her to complete it, and I know Atheila has a following and the backing of our Father.”

He frowned and scratched his chin.

“And your Mother?”

“I have no idea. I’ve never seen her do anything, but she would have to be strong if my father married her. The difference is she wasn’t born with our bloodline. It was given to her, which is why she always flaunts it. That sudden boost was too much for her to learn to overcome.

“And odds are she probably has acquired a red skill also from an elixir.”

“These odds keep getting worse every time we talk about this,” Fowl muttered.

“Yes, but the good news is I know where she’s going to be,” Tanila replied. “Thankfully, she won’t be in the castle as she and my mother have never gotten along since the day of our fight. If there is one thing about Atheila that has never changed, it’s that she doesn’t forgive or forget.”

“Typical woman,” Fowl muttered before getting elbowed in the side.

“Not the time to say that,” Batrire growled.

“He’s fine and maybe it is. That’s what I’m betting on actually,” Tanila stated. “As I said before, if I can draw her out, challenge her, it would give you a chance to go in and get Cordellia.”

Max nodded, still not happy with the idea of her being put into a fight he would have to stand by and just watch.

“Once she is safe, you know what I’m going to do.”

“I do… and I’m going to help you with it,” Tanila replied. “I should have done it long ago but for the right reasons. The tower taught me something recently and that… being… or whatever… Chromie was right. Our actions have consequences. Me not killing her back then kept me from turning into something I didn’t want to be. I won’t make that same choice this time because this world or any world doesn’t need someone like her in it.”

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“I’ve never realized how beautiful everything looks from up here!”

Max squeezed twice, signaling he agreed.

“The trees look tiny as well!”

He chuckled as Tanila continued to yell, remembering how he felt the first time he could fly with his spell or ride on Rakonath's neck.

"Just make sure to tell me where to go!"

She squeezed his hand twice and as he waited for her to inform him of the area she wanted to land, Max was amazed at how much of the forest was actually homes.

Small towns had villages located in or around trees. Farms spread out around larger trees, and Tanila had talked about families who lived in them.

Rivers and streams ran everywhere, carrying the important liquid to each town.

Larger cities had open spaces and sections with three to a dozen massive trees connected via bridges.

Lights could be seen below, and the pace of life beneath him seemed so slow.

All the stories I ever heard and the few pictures I saw that were painted don't do this justice.

It is a shame that someone would risk all this by angering you. Tanila seems anxious. I can sense her hesitation. Just how dangerous is her father?

Max couldn't help when his frown returned.

The discussion of Savantus's powers was a problem. Not knowing what all the elven King could do meant walking into a situation blind. Even worse, knowing that her mother had skills she had never displayed made for two unknowns.

For a brief moment, he had seen the pain in her eyes as she talked about him.

Tanila's eyes trembled the entire time she spoke and he could only imagine the home she had grown up in.

I can sense the turmoil inside you. Your friends are right, you often struggle to carry weights that aren't yours to carry. Right now, all you need to do is be there for her. Even if she doesn't recognize it right now, I'm certain in time Tanila will.

When did you get so smart? I mean, I know we talk about this all the time, but you amaze me more every day. Still I felt the pain you experienced when Aerthen said no.

I hoped she would say yes only because you asked me, and then told me you would ask her. I doubted she would come. Part of me wanted to believe she might come for you and me, but her reason is valid.

I remember the dream she shared about Seth Pendal and the two dragons he slew. It was scary, and I think I understood why she was anxious upon hearing the name you had hidden under.

What was that?

A low thrum came from Rakonath as they flew and Tanila glanced back at him.

Tapping his head, he smiled when she rolled her eyes.

“YET another conversation you keep hidden!”

Aerthen wasn’t sure if you were possibly ‘the’ Seth Pendal.

That’s silly. That happened centuries ago!

Is it? Who is to say that moving through time isn’t possible? What if you were that Seth Pendal and in the coming time found yourself in that moment, hiding behind a name you already knew and with the abilities you have? Surely you could defeat two dragons then.

Max erupted in laughter, having never even considered that possibility before.

I’m not sure I’m strong enough to do that right now, but that also makes me wonder how strong Seth Pendal was. Even Ockrim and Phaius mentioned that he was a thorn in their side. I wonder what it would take for a person to be like that.

Soon, you will be just like him, if not stronger. I believe you will save your friend and that the five of you will complete this quest you have set before yourselves. For now, focus on the plan Tanila has created. She is right. It makes sense to choose this path to avoid the needless deaths of innocents.

With his hand, he patted a silver scale and then squeezed Tanila, putting his lips against the back of her neck.

“I love you.”

“I know!”

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/that-which-devours-aaaa2-9y2xu.jpg?time=1727104122

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/94482/that-which-devours

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[F7]3/476(1) Chapter 476 - Bitter Reunions

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-09 16:00 [2025-06-09 11:21]
[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2342434/chapter-476-bitter-reunions;

[F7]3/476(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 16:01],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-09 16:00],[Wayback_first2025-06-09 16:01],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-09 16:01],[this.word2025-06-09 16:02],[publish2025-06-09 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-06-09 16:00])Chapter 476 - Bitter Reunions - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 476 - Bitter Reunions

“I am fine. You four go. If Max needs me, I will come.”

Tanila gave a pair of scales a good scratching on Rakonath’s neck, smiling as the dragon trilled slightly.

“You know, when he told me that he had a dragon, at first I didn’t believe him,” she stated. “Then I, of course, knew it had to be true because sometimes it feels like Max craps gold coins.”

A low thrum came from Rakonath who gazed at Max with his silver eyes.

“And then I met you for the first time and could sense how you settled him. It was at that moment I knew you two were perfect for each other.”

“Thank you,” Rakonath said, holding his snout out just a few feet from her. “I am glad he has a mate who is much smarter and wiser than he is.”

Laughter came from everyone as Max let out a groan.

“Alright, we need to get moving. I don’t need my dragon or my wife talking about how I’m basically a second-class person.”

Tanila gave a few more pats and then moved to join the others.

“It’s about five miles through the woods till we reach our first obstacle. There shouldn’t be anyone out here but that doesn’t mean it can’t happen. We’re in Atheila’s section of the kingdom, and people give it a wide berth.”

“Because?”

“Because she is just as likely to take your life as anything else,” Tanila informed Fowl. “Trust me when I say this: her mood changes without rhyme or reason. One moment she can be… loving, and the next she will try to tear your heart out.”

With a nod, she led them deeper into the trees, only occasionally glancing back at them.

“I got Batrire, you stay with her,” Fowl said as they ran behind her. “She looks to be in a hurry.”

Giving his friend a quick thump on the shoulder, Max joined Tanila as she weaved her way through the trees.

Each was at least three hundred feet tall, and its trunks were well over a dozen feet wide. Some were easily thirty feet in diameter, and their branches were larger than the trunks of other trees.

“It’s a beautiful place.”

“And a deadly one,” Tanila said as she pointed to the left. “Those vines on that tree can ensnare animals or people who don’t know about them. The flower that grows on them emits a pleasant scent, and if you don’t have friends and aren’t strong enough, they will quickly choke you and eat you.”

Every so often she would point out something else that was dangerous, from berries to thorns, many things with poison that could lead to hallucinations or simply kill you if consumed or coated on a weapon.

Finally, as she slowed down, Max and the rest mimicked her movement and hunched down, hearing the sound of people further ahead.

“There is a compound coming up in a small clearing. It’s been a long time since I’ve been here, but a small wall was surrounding it at one point.”

“I still can’t believe the trees covered it,” Fowl muttered. “Elven magic…”

Max nodded, having been a little frustrated when they tried to get a view of it from Rakonath’s back. He had considered stealthing and going through the tops of the trees on his own, but Tanila had warned him that there were birds that lived in them that could detect magic. If they all suddenly took off in flight, it would draw attention they didn’t want.

The trees began to thin out, and when they got their first real look, Tanila cursed under her breath.

“She’s been busy.”

The small wall was gone, replaced with a twenty-foot one that encircled most of the clearing. They knew it was over a quarter mile wide, but without any way of seeing the entire clearing or what was inside, the next part was even harder.

“So… we’re still just going to go up to the main gate and walk in?” Fowl muttered. “I mean… while I admire the pair you got swinging, that seems like we’re showing all the cards we hold.”

“It will throw her off slightly,” Tanila replied. “Don’t forget, we’re using Max’s trick against Dagon. It’s the only reason we’re doing this.”

“We should go then,” Batrire whispered. “If I can hear the sound of fighting inside, I know you all can too.”

Max motioned to Tanila, and they started moving along the edge of the trees.

His trap skill warned him, and he held up a hand, finding a small tripwire that ran between two trees on the path they were going down.

Each of them made sure not to set it off, and over the next ten minutes, he spotted over a dozen more, navigating his team safely past them.

Finally, they reached the treeline with a road going west from the entrance. A pair of elves stood at the open gate, each of them appearing not to be paying much attention.

“I could sneak past them,” Max said. “There is still that option.”

“No, doing so means we can’t play with all your bags of tricks,” Tanila whispered. “Trust me. This is the way.”

Sighing, Max motioned to the road and Tanila stepped out first, each of them following after.

Immediately, as their presence became known, both elves had bows out and were shouting.

Soon, loud noises came from inside, and almost twenty elves poured out of the entrance.

They froze upon seeing the gold-haired elf walking down the path with a trio behind her.

Max couldn’t help but wonder what was going through their minds when they saw someone they all knew was royalty approaching.

“Stay close and behind me. I’ll handle the walls unless you think we need more,” Tanila whispered.

Grunting, he said nothing else, watching as she walked in a way different from her normal gait. Even her stance seemed to make her look taller.

“I, Tanila Gilmenor, have come to see my sister, Atheila Gilmenor. Tell her the time to face me is now!”

With less than thirty yards now between them, none had raised a weapon, and it took less than a second before a pair of elves took off back into the base.

“Now we wait.”

It didn’t take long before even more shouting came, and every elf standing in the entrance quickly moved to the side as an elf stomped past them.

Her gold hair was tied back in braids, and both eyes looked ready to send magical attacks at Tanila.

A sneer was plastered on her lips as she came to the gate's entrance.

Silver chain armor covered her entire body, and swords were strapped across her back.

“She’s taller than you,” Fowl muttered. “I mean–”

“Quiet,” Batrire said.

Atheila crossed both arms and shook her head.

“So, sister. You’ve come to challenge me? I heard rumors you were with this Max… this Seth Pendal and part of his party, but I never truly believed such a thing. Oh how Thujya will be disappointed to know that…”

Her words stopped and both of her eyes widened.

Max could see her mouth drop and knew precisely what she had realized.

“You’re pregnant!”

“I am.”

Golden eyes darted from Tanila to Max, and then his sonar picked up her teeth grinding even from this distance.

“Is it his?! The one who has slaughtered our kind!”

“Yes, and you’re a fool for taking Cordellia.”

A large glob of spit hit the ground and both swords appeared in Atheila’s hands.

“I should cut that abomination from your belly and take it to our Father! Then I would give you to him and enjoy watching the torture you would endure.”

“Don’t,” Tanila said as Max started to move forward. “You’re welcome to try, but as I have stated, I have come to challenge you as is my right. Perhaps you will finally be able to win. Or as I expect, most likely you’ll be on your back again, crying as you realize I’m still the stronger Gilmenor.”

The sound of thunder came as both swords slammed into each other.

“You are going to die! But not before you watch me give each of your friends the kiss they deserve. Then you will experience it, knowing as you bid this life goodbye that I was always the chosen one.”

“Strong words for a girl who lives alone. Now then go fetch my friend and then prepare the place. I am ready to end this charade and let her and my friends see what a real Gilmenor looks like.”

Max could sense a change in the air. The hairs on his neck rose as he sensed an arrow streaking at them from the woods.

A wall of air stopped it as he summoned it, just three yards before it would have struck Tanila.

“Fire nova, now,” Max whispered.

She didn’t hesitate, casting one and watching as a pair of elves in stealth appeared, each covered in flames, crying out from the fire that burned them.

Two frost spears flew, each striking the heads of the would-be attackers and ending their lives in a moment.

“Do not break the challenge again!” Tanila shouted. “You and I both know that no matter what claim you have, if I leave now and report it, Father will summon you, waiting to deal with me until after we have fought.”

Fury flashed across Atheila’s face and once again the teeth grinding reached Max’s ears.

“Those fools were acting on their own,” she called out, “I would never break the rule of a challenge.”

A scoff came from Tanila.

“Then bring my friend and lead the way. Just know if another one here attacks me or my party, I will snuff their lives without a second thought.”

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Every head was bowed as they walked past the ones standing at the gate.

Max’s sonar could tell none risked a glance, somehow held in check by Tanila’s promise or some magical effect.

Atheila was further ahead, shouting out orders to the rest of the elves in the base, causing everyone to move without delay.

“We’re going deeper into the belly of a dragon,” Fowl whispered. “We’re completely surrounded.”

“Stop talking,” Tanila said, her tone short and hard.

Max felt his friend flinch as the power of her voice hit them all.

Soon, the few wood and stone buildings closest to the entrance gave way to a good-sized clearing about a hundred yards by fifty yards. Dozens of weapons were on racks, and elves were picking up all of them, moving them off to the side, grabbing archery targets, and more.

“This is where we shall decide who the true victor is,” Atheila called out as she continued her pace to the middle of the field. Raising both hands, she spun, a wicked smile displaying all her teeth as she glared at them. “Here is where you and your friends will die.”

Shaking her head, Tanila pointed at the end of the field.

“We will go there. I am still waiting for my friend. For your sake, she best be alright.”

“Bruised, beaten… perhaps more,” Atheila said with a chuckle. “Any elf willing to party with you and that man deserves what they got. Remember, sister, they are merely tools to help us reach the power Thuyja wishes us to possess. They are not friends. Or did you forget what your last friend cost you?”

Max could feel Tanila stiffen at that comment.

“I did not… sister. If I remember right, it almost cost me the life of my sister. But even worse it costs you our Father’s respect and what some might call love. Now, do not make me ask again, or I will burn everything here to ash. Where is Cordellia?”

A sharp whistle came about ten seconds later from a building on Atheila’s side. From it emerged their friend, shackled in chains.

Even with the distance between them, Max could see her state.

Unbraided hair, with clumps of dirt or other material in it, made her look like someone who lived on a street. Each article of clothing, if it could be called that, was torn and barely stayed on her body.

The fire in his belly roared to life and his knuckles popped as he made a fist.

“Here is the whore you call a friend,” Atheila said as she gestured with a hand to where Cordellia was. “You should know that–”

“ENOUGH!”

Tanila’s shout somehow sent a wave of pressure around her, and Max realized what would happen.

“Move back some, you three, now.”

They quickly got away from their mage without waiting another second, sensing the change in the air around her.

“You , sister, will allow me to withdraw my benevolence and end the life that has been mine all along, ridding this world of your presence,” Tanila growled.

Links

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[F7]4/477(1) Chapter 477 - Finding Their Friend

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-10 16:00 [2025-06-09 16:02] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2345345/chapter-477-finding-their-friend;477(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-10 16:06],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-10 16:06],[Wayback_first2025-06-10 16:06],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-10 16:05],[this.word2025-06-10 16:09],[publish2025-06-10 16:00],

Chapter 477 - Finding Their Friend

Atheila’s swords clanged against each other as she let out a roar, a similar aura coming from her.

“She’s passed the 60th floor!” Fowl exclaimed.

Max wanted to help but had promised he wouldn’t unless there was no other option.

Like Tanila, her older sister’s presence seemed to come from her in waves. Her golden eyes had a red tint around the edges.

Only the trio of elves standing near Cordellia didn’t seem affected by this display of power; the rest of their kind moved away from the area where both princesses were about to battle on.

“Stay back. Be ready to use your abilities,” Max said. “If what I think is about to happen does, the power loosed here will destroy this place.”

Batrire and Fowl both backed up, their warrior holding his shield outward.

He could see the trio who were holding their friend captive. The chain that they had her bound with was attached to a female elf, a thick chain locked to a belt she wore.

They knew what we might try…

His sonar was going crazy, and the earth almost seemed to tremble as both women shifted slightly, each completely focused upon the other.

He had to wait for Atheila to engage. Only then could he risk the plan they had discussed. The slight variation made things harder as he wasn’t sure if the chain would affect anything.

A small horn appeared from the trio in one of the male warriors' hands.

A single note came and as he blew, both princesses engaged.

Magic sprang to life as Tanila cast multiple elemental walls, each destroyed by a single swipe of Atheila’s weapon.

In the blink of an eye, the older one had crossed the field, swords swinging without hesitation, cutting through the air where their mage had been.

Ice spears began to rain down from the sky, none of them large as Tanila didn’t have time to invest much mana. Yet, she created distance between herself and her sister, using her new spell to avoid a quick death.

Max didn’t wait as both women traded sides.

[Blink]

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Power Strike]

He could see the elf trying to react, her eyes unable to track and keep up with his weapon as the blade swung at the one who had bound themselves to his friend.

A clang sounded as a shield appeared before her, blocking his strike and sending the elf flying through the air and into a few buildings to her left.

“You-”

The other warrior's cry was interrupted as he roared. His frustration and the knowledge that one of them had to have used a skill similar to his prevented him from ending the life he had come to claim.

A sword came toward him, and his sword deflected it. He kicked the shield that protected the second warrior, using every ounce of strength he had.

Like the first, he was sent flying, crashing into the building behind him, shattering wood and stone.

His dimensional space appeared where Cordellia was and as he moved to grab her, dragging her inside, she and the elf attached to her suddenly vanished before he could.

Behind him raged a battle, earth being sent flying in all directions as Tanila and Atheila fought.

Max ignored it as best he could, sensing how close her sister came each time to landing a blow, shrugging off the spells that assaulted the older princess.

His sonar told him where the pair had gone, hearing his friend's cry off to the left.

Like a blur, he took off, running in that direction, seeing the woman holding up a staff and flames surrounding it.

She unleashed a spell he didn’t recognize, the tip of the weapon glowing and reminding him of the time he had fought the elf mage Aria in the arena.

He wanted to curse, but there wasn’t enough time. A dragon’s face came at him, flames and fire coiling like a snake.

Taking a chance he let it hit him, plowing through the blistering heat that began to burn his flesh.

[Regeneration]

It hurt, burning hotter than he had imagined, but it was only pain. That was something Max had learned to endure. All that time alone had been overwhelming. The fights he had faced on Igarra’s world had burned off the weakness that had once potentially afflicted him.

He smiled, knowing his entire body was covered in flames, potentially looking like the scene from the wurm long ago in the tower.

The expression on his opponent's face changed in a moment. The smirk she had worn at first was gone, her mouth now open, and words were trying to come out.

His weapon extended, transforming into a spear and he thrust his blade at her chest.

She flew backward, tumbling, dragging his friend who yelped in pain as his weapon struck a magical shield of some kind, shattering and piercing the outfit she wore.

Max spun, parrying the first elf's attack. Blue eyes glared at him. Only a single sword strike came, and the arm that had held his shield hung limply by his side.

A simple combo of four attacks sent the weapon flying from the elf, his hand still attached to the hilt.

“I DON’T HAVE TIME!”

[Spell Burst]

The ice shard he had summoned flew forward, and stone and dirt rose from the ground, preventing the warrior from escaping.

Max didn’t wait, not needing to watch as the shard of ice pierced the warrior’s chest, knowing that it would continue on the path he had sent it.

The sensation he longed for came, guaranteeing that his opponent wouldn’t rise again.

With that knowledge confirmed by the rush of cold through him, Max dashed toward the woman who dared to chain his friend to her.

Coughs came as the pair were entangled, the chain wrapped around them.

A wand appeared, and Max watched as the elf pointed it at his friend.

She laughed, unleashing the lightning bolt, just a few small feet separating the pair.

[Protect Ally]

His body vibrated, the sensation of electricity tearing through him as the woman channeled the wand. Her eyes widened as the spell meant for Cordellia now struck his shield.

“You… lose…”

His words felt strained, his jaw not moving as he wanted, having to speak through clenched teeth.

Yet as he spoke, stone spikes came up from underneath, his Stone Mastery bringing forth weapons the world was kind enough to provide.

A scream came as his dagger-sized weapons pierced her body in over a dozen places, springing forth from the soil and into her flesh.

With the elf’s concentration broken, the wand stopped what it was doing and his body moved as he needed it to.

Max’s arm moved without delay, spear thrusting forward, catching the woman in her open mouth.

A single twist of his wrist sent a second cold sensation through his body.

Cordellia’s eyes looked at him, tears flowing and he wasn’t sure if it was from pain or happiness.

“You’re safe!”

His words came out, and as they did his sonar told him the truth of that moment.

Well over a hundred arrows rained down upon them.

He didn’t hesitate, eyes locked on his friend, shields forming around her. An earthen and stone dome surrounded their archer.

Countless arrows bounced off him, the occasional one finding a gap in his armor, sticking for a moment before his regeneration skill pushed them from his flesh.

Turning he saw a dozen elven archers about seventy yards away. A few had stopped firing arrows as the others continued to send them.

Some glowed with magical power, and his shield deflected the two he knew were empowered.

Each one did nothing but snap off, his strength allowing him to stride through the barrage of metal tips aimed at him.

A rage like no other came.

They were going to kill her… they were going to even kill their friend if that’s what it took to end Cordellia’s life!

Enduring the arrows, Max summoned his dimensional storage. With a simple use of his magic, he lifted the protective dome he had created and slipped it inside.

Once it passed through, it melted away, and Max grabbed the chain, which was hanging halfway in and out.

With a jerk, he snapped the thick links and tossed the broken end inside.

“There are potions. Rest. I’ll be back.”

“You came…”

Her voice told him that she had not believed they would.

The tears that came were another sign that what she had believed would happen wasn’t this.

“I told you. You’re family, and I’ll never stop protecting you.”

Sobs came and Max felt himself struggling with the need to act and to run in there and hug her.

“I need to end this. You need to rest. Take the potions and heal. Just know we’ll be together soon.”

Cordellia sniffed and nodded, her eyes trembling as the door shut.

Able to focus on the elves who had now realized the folly of their decision, Max laughed.

He could feel the hunger of everything.

Bob was gone, but his skill was still there. A part of his friend was still connected, and he thirsted for vengeance.

Every promise Max had made about protecting his friends and family stood less than seventy yards away.

“Time to die,” he growled.

Before any of them could react, a monster was in their midst.

Screams came as his spells burned them to a crisp, ice shattering their bones and his blade ensured that none would ever take a breath again.

Panting, he gazed around him, a dozen elves in various pieces, scorched and frozen.

A few yards away the last one was on their back, an arm missing, holding the stump with their other hand, eyes darting everywhere, looking it appeared for some way out.

“Mercy, I–”

“Made the wrong choice,” Max said as he stepped forward, his blade taking the elf in the heart.

The cold sensation was barely there, and the list of things that begged his attention was ignored.

Behind him the sounds of a storm and battle far worse than what he had just done rang out.

Without hesitating, he raced to his friends, knowing where they would be, smashing the pieces of buildings that occasionally rained down from above.

Bounding into the air, he looked down. The once-packed dirt now had furrows of freshly plowed soil.

Every building that was within thirty yards of the area was gone.

Way off to the side, he could see Fowl holding his shield, a pair of elves not moving on the ground.

Tanila and Atheila were still fighting, each with blood visible on their clothes and bodies.

Yet neither seemed to be slowing down as the pair knew what this fight meant.

Every ounce of him yearned to land near the older sister and plunge his blade into her.

Yet the promise he had made held him back.

“She’s my problem. You cannot interfere. Promise me.”

Tanila’s voice echoed in his mind as Max remembered her request. Somehow, Fowl and Rakonath had convinced him to agree to it.

Landing near their warrior and healer, Max’s shield came up, blocking a rock that flew in their direction.

“You two okay?”

“Barely… they came out of nowhere.”

“Rogues,” Batrire said as she spat. “It’s a good thing I used that potion.”

Max nodded and opened his dimensional space.

“We’ll talk later. Get inside.”

“You can’t be serious!” Fowl protested. “They’re–”

“We agreed. All of us. Now, go help Cordellia. She needs you.”

Both dwarves turned to see their archer looking at them, covered in dirt and filth, streaks of clean skin where the tears had washed away the mess from her cheeks.

“We’re here, dear. Let me help,” Batrire said as she stepped inside.

“I’ve got this,” Max said, motioning for his friend to follow the others.

“Your promise?”

Sighing, he nodded. “I won’t break it. But Atheila better hope Tanila kills her, or so help me that elf will know pain like no one should ever know.”

A grunt came from Fowl, and he jogged into the space with the other two.

“I’ll be back.”

As the door shut and he turned, Max frowned.

This is harder than she had expected.

Links

//[2025-06-10 16:09]

[None]

[F7]5/478(1) Chapter 478 - Sister vs Sister

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-11 16:00 [2025-06-10 16:09]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2348115/chapter-478-sister-vs-sister;
[F7]5/478(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-11 16:03],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-11 16:03],[Wayback_first2025-06-11 16:03],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-11 16:01],[this.word2025-06-11 16:02],[publish2025-06-11 16:00],
[this.Last_edit2025-06-11 16:00])Chapter 478 - Sister vs Sister - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 478 - Sister vs Sister

Tanila wanted nothing more than to wipe the smug look off her sister's face. The tip of her sword had managed to cut her before her Wizard Step had gotten her to safety.

She’s faster... has to be a skill!

“You’re getting predictable!’ Atheila cried out, grinning from ear to ear.

Frost Nova exploded out from Tanila again, her older sister once again slowing down just slightly as the spell covered fifty yards of the torn-up area they fought on.

Even with all her increased stats from not hiding behind her bracelet, that spell and the space it bought her had been the only thing keeping her safe in this fight.

Precious mana was consumed every second, keeping a monster she had chosen to spare from killing her.

Max’s appearance and the two spells he sent upward told her that Cordellia and the others were safe.

She could see the red tint to her sister’s eyes, no longer a true gold but a testament that she was using the skill their Father had given her.

Whatever she’s done, Atheila has grown stronger. The only thing I can think of is the gear...

Tanila blinked away again, praying it was most likely the above-average gear the tower had granted her that made up for whatever power Atheila now possessed. The other thought was too painful, knowing how many her sister must have killed and consumed physical stats from.

That thought almost cost her more blood as she poured mana into another spell. The smirk on her sister’s face grew as her blade barely missed her.

“I’m going to enjoy killing you and your child!”

The rage Tanila felt boiling inside her wanted to come out, but Max had warned her about it. She knew he was right, but she only now realized how grateful she was to King Dagon for letting them train in his private room.

Going up against Max and the King had shown her how much she held back and now with that limit lifted, Tanila let loose.

Every bit of training Tom had ever put her through came into play as vines rose up exactly where her sister stepped.

They didn't slow Atheila down much as a sword quickly cut loose the spell that wanted to hold the elf in place.

Her older sister laughed as failed stone prisons and ice spells allowed Tanila the space she needed for this next part.

A spear of air appeared, and she grabbed onto it, sending out a blinding spell from her dark magic she rarely used.

For only two seconds, those golden eyes dimmed; she was airborne at that moment, quickly rising fifty yards above the battle area.

Beneath her were divots they had created in the soil, boulders that had been sent flying, and other spells that had done nothing to stop the elf that wanted her dead.

"You can't run! I'll track–"

"I'm not running!" Tanila shouted, cutting off her sister as she sent forth multiple spells simultaneously.

Earth spears and ice ones rained down from the sky as she summoned air ones from behind her sister.

With ease, the older elf dodged the ones she saw, and a fountain of blood came as one she couldn't see pierced a part of her leg.

Both swords vanished and a bow appeared, arrows leaping from the string in a seemingly never-ending stream of barbed metal tips.

Shields blocked the ones that came as Tanila sped away, now riding on a second ice spear, sending more spells at Atheila who dodged the incoming barrage.

Each of them traded shots, blood-covered sections on each of their bodies.

For a moment, she had considered drinking a potion, but the truth was that she had only lost about a tenth of her total hit points, and her injuries were only a nuisance.

Atheila had already drunk one potion and appeared on the verge of doing it again, the hole in her leg leaving a trail of blood as she moved.

Every spell Tanila sent felt like it wasn't strong enough to take down her sister in a single attack. The time it took to invest mana into a real spell wasn't there and her pool was already half gone.

Think… what would Max do?

Arrows continued to track her, and the small spells she sent did not reach Atheila, as the older elf appeared to have already learned not to stay in the same spot for more than a moment.

Movement in the corner of her vision showed him standing there, weapon ready, waiting on the edge of everything.

She saw Atheila glance at Max, a laugh coming from her.

“He’s going to watch me kill you? That’s priceless!”

A kick inside her gut almost made her lose her balance on the air spear she was standing on.

Her child… their child had just kicked.

Tears began to form as she was overwhelmed.

Don’t worry little one! No one is going to take you from us!

Everything inside her felt alive. Her skin's pores started tingling, and she could feel the tiny hair follicles stand.

A peace was ther,e and yet a storm began to brew.

We’re one!

That thought made her consider a few things she had attempted but never succeeded.

Tanila started infusing mana into a cloud above her, sacrificing her ability to send offensive spells and requiring her to focus on dodging and defense.

As her attacks slowed, Atheila pulled out a potion and drank it completely.

Her sister tossed the empty glass bottle toward her, unleashing arrows at her again.

Fire, wind, lightning, ice.

They all mixed together in the cloud above.

It began to expand over the area they were fighting in, darkening out the light that managed to make its way through the trees above her.

A wind began to blow, and Tanila could feel the drain of the spell as her mana pool dipped past a third.

From up here she swore that Atheila frowned for a moment, that smirk vanishing from where it had been almost painted on since their fight started.

“Come and fight me, you bitch!”

None of the taunts reached her.

The peace that filled Tanila told her that one of the greatest lessons she had learned was to fight in her own way.

A real mage didn’t go toe to toe with a warrior or rogue.

They didn’t stand still and let some archer use them as a target.

For too long, she had been content to stand there, depending upon others to protect her, to shield her, or to keep her safe in the midst of a battle.

No longer would that happen.

From this moment on, this place was her domain, and she would unleash hell within it.

Tanila fought back her fatigue, knowing she was down to only a fifth of her total mana.

As their gazes locked upon each other, she pointed her staff at Atheila and watched as the cloud that had now surrounded the entire compound unleashed the fury that was contained within it.

Lighting, flaming ice, and wind spikes all fell like rain, pouring down upon the space beneath her.

For a brief moment, her sister’s eyes widened and then two shields appeared in her hands, held above as the spell struck.

A stone prison began to form around Atheila as she couldn’t avoid the onslaught from above and dodge simultaneously. The wind swirled like a tornado, focused around the older elf and sending damaging spells past her defenses.

Tanila allowed herself to descend, knowing she eventually had to face her sister head-on.

She saw Max standing there on the edge of the field that was being obliterated by her rage.

Every building was in the process of being destroyed, none able to withstand the spell she would name Tempest.

He smiled, nodding as he stood there, a shield above him.

Occasionally, a part of her storm would strike him, and he would simply shrug it off, his eyes fixed upon her.

She could read his lips.

“End this.”

Each step she took closer to her sister caused the storm to grow. The wind was tearing up massive chunks of earth, pelting Atheila from all around.

And then, as she drew close enough, she saw the notification appear.

[Target Acquired for Mind Devour]

[Draining]

With effort, she held back the moan that wanted to escape her throat.

Like someone desperate for water who finally feels the cool relief wash down their throat, Tanila experienced one of the greatest pleasures she tried to avoid.

Only Max could make her feel better than this, yet right now, using this on her sister awoke the feeling she remembered as a child.

There had been a moment when she had almost given in to the hunger and lust of this ability.

Her mind exploded, tingling, and she felt recharged. More mana flowed into her as the spell drained Atheila of her intelligence and wisdom.

Glimpses of memories started to appear ,and gone was the part she hungered for.

This was the moment she hated.

Thousands of faces flashed before her as a scream cried out over the noise of the wind.

So many faces, each one drawing close as Tanila saw them from her sister's own eyes.

At that moment, she could smell and taste the people Atheila had pressed her lips against and drained their life.

At least half of those she saw looked utterly afraid, yet many also looked ecstatic.

Caught in that moment, her mind fought to maintain the focus needed to keep her Tempest spell going while allowing Mind Devour to do its job.

Seconds passed, and the scream from her sister never subsided as a pair of eyes stared at her from under the shields, red blood trickling down her eye sockets.

Blood flowed from all over Atheila's body, the once glistening silver armor now turning red.

"I'll… kill… you…"

Those words were spoken in defiance, and Tanila shook her head.

Grinding her teeth, she dug deep, summoning walls of stone and air, reinforcing the prison that held her sister's feet.

"Father… will…" As Atheila spoke, her body trembled and flashed a myriad of colors. "Kill you all!"

[Mind Devour - Blocked]

Her shout made Tanila step back, knowing whatever trump skills her sister had been saving were now in play.

Earth and stone flew out as her sister slammed a shield into the wall and the prison.

Atheila glared at her, taking slow steps in her direction.

The howl of the wind didn't subside, yet a barrier had appeared between her and her sister’s mind.

She has learned something to stop me!

Each moment her sister approached her. Atheila pressed against the storm, ignoring the shards of ice, lightning bolts, flames, and wind buffeting her battered body.

A glint of metal caught her attention as Atheila’s shield vanished, her arm coming forward, and a dagger flew at her.

She moved to the side, but she wasn’t fast enough. The distance was too close, and it plunged into her shoulder, missing its original target.

Pain radiated through her body as the blade struck and the storm's fury began to subside.

Once again, that smirk appeared on Atheila’s lips, and with the Tanila’s Tempest spell beginning to diminish, the older elf pulled her sword out.

“Like I said, you’re going to—”

Her words stopped as her body flashed a few colors.

Glancing down, Atheila saw a hole in her abdomen, a solid eight inches wide.

“I…”

Shock and surprise were present, and Tanila stood, the dregs of her mana pool empty, but the spell she had been holding and building, knowing this moment would come, had done its job.

“You stood still. You lose.”

Atheila blinked repeatedly, the sword gone as her hand reached down, finding an air spear still inside her.

“How…”

“Practice. Not depending upon others and doing things myself,” Tanila said between tired breaths.

A chuckle came from Atheila, and she winced, coughing blood. She shook her head.

“No… not today.”

Confused, Tanila saw a look on her sister’s face and tried to draw mana to send another spell but knew she was drained completely.

In her sister’s hand was the bracelet that matched hers.

“He’s going to come… you’re going to die.”

“NO!”

Her shout didn’t matter as Atheila crushed her bracelet.

Light erupted in that dark space as the cloud above dissipated, finally allowing light through.

“What? Where is she?!”

Max shouted as he caught her as she sagged to her feet.

Glancing up, Tanila frowned, feeling his finger against her cheek.

“What did she use?”

“The bracelet,” she got out, taking a few more breaths and finally able to stand alone. “I… I forgot, as I had sworn I’d never use it. It took her home… to Father. We… we need to go.”

Rakonath!

I’m on my way!

He could sense the direction his dragon was coming from.

“Quick, get inside and help with Cordellia and get healed. I’ll get us out of here.”

Links

//[2025-06-11 16:02]

[None]

[F7]6/479(1) Chapter 479 - Burning Things Down

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-12 16:00 [2025-06-11 16:00]

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2350758/chapter-479-burning-things-down;6/479(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-13 9:08],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-13 9:08],[Wayback_first2025-06-13 9:08],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-13 9:07],[this.word2025-06-13 9:17],[publish2025-06-12 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-12 16:00])Chapter 479 - Burning Things Down - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 479 - Burning Things Down

“Thank you.”

Max nodded, gently squeezing Cordellia’s hand as he smiled at her.

“You’re family. Never forget that.”

Her eyes began to leak again at those words, and she nodded, their healer on one side of her and Tanila on the other.

He could only imagine how she felt and what she was dealing with. Hundreds of questions ran through his mind, but none needed to be asked right now. Max also knew he or the others would never ask most.

“So she got away?”

Sighing, Tanila nodded.

“I forgot about the bracelet’s last function. Part of me thought I had everything locked down. While I want to believe she didn’t make it, I have no doubt she’s alive. Like a bug, she just won’t die.”

“Uh… So what’s our plan now?” Fowl asked after a few moments of silence.

“We return to Peltagow and make sure everyone is safe. From there…”

Max’s voice trailed off as he tried not to assume how things would go.

“The tower,” Cordellia said quietly. “We need… I need to get stronger. I…”

Her voice cracked, and both women gave her a gentle squeeze.

Tears ran down her cheeks, and their archer sniffed, shaking her head.

“I won’t let them take anything else from me. It’s bad enough they managed to take my storage item and all my equipment.”

“How did they do that?”

She shrugged at Fowl.

“I don’t know… I was drugged… Lh…” Taking a deep breath, Cordellia appeared to steel herself. “Lhoris gave me a drink, and the next thing I knew, I was surrounded and far away from you all. Everything was gone.”

Her voice trembled at those last words.

“I’m sorry… all those items, they–”

“Don’t apologize,” Max said, shaking his head. “They’re just items. You are worth far more than any of them. Besides… I wasn’t sure how or when to give you this, but I made this before… all this.”

The bow he made her appeared in his outstretched hand.

Cordellia gasped when her eyes locked upon the bow he had crafted.

A total of four large cores, two in both the top and bottom limbs, shimmered with a power that most couldn’t imagine.

Damn Bob, I wish you were here to witness this.

A single string that looked like gold but was from a metal he had acquired from Igarra's vault made the weapon ready to fire.

"You… made that for me?"

Smiling, he nodded and motioned for her to take it.

"I've been working hard on this. For so long, I knew you needed an upgrade, and well… Nimyn was kind enough to donate to that cause. Go ahead and take it. See what it can do."

Her eyes widened, and she took it from him with a trembling hand.

Her eyes began to blink repeatedly, and he was glad Tanila and Batrire were beside her, keeping her legs from buckling.

"Max… it's…"

"Gods, now you got to tell me what it does," Fowl said with a chuckle.

He saw the look Batrire gave, but Cordellia started to laugh, shaking her head and clearing her throat.

"I'm good. I can stand. Really."

Both women gave her a little room as their archer took a few steps away.

Rakonath thrummed slightly as the elf moved so that she was clear of the others. The field they had landed in and exited Max's dimensional space was surrounded by trees on all sides.

Slowly, she held the bow out with her left hand, reached for the string, and pulled it back.

An arrow appeared on it, causing their warrior to curse.

The shimmering white arrow grew brighter, and when Cordellia let the string go, it streaked across the field, covering a two-hundred-yard gap. It then hit a tree, shattering the thick trunk and traveling through it to the next one.

"Holy elf tits!"

Max smiled as his friend repeated his usual curse.

The same things happened three more times, and soon, well over a dozen trees fell to the ground, causing a loud crashing noise even from this distance, sending birds into the air.

"It takes time to recharge," Max said as he pointed at the orbs. "Each one holds a charge. Still, it's nice to know you can–"

Cordellia was upon him, arms wrapped around his chest, her new bow smacking him in the back and burying her face against his shoulder.

"Thank you!"

He smiled, gently patting her back and using his other hand to brush her unbraided hair.

“Like I said, you’re family. Besides, I like you better than Fowl. So I wanted you to have something better than him.”

“Bah, you suck!” their warrior exclaimed. “I just want to know the stats!”

Laughing, Cordellia gave Max another squeeze and let go. Turning to see everyone staring at her, she coughed.

“Uh… sorry… I got a little overwhelmed.”

“You’re fine, dear,” Batrire replied. “Just promise me you don’t tell him. I like watching Fowl pout.”

Everyone laughed as their warrior held up his middle finger.

“Bah, just know when the time comes, and he finally gives me something good. I’m not saying a word.”

“So what I already made you isn’t any good?” Max asked.

“Bah.. ah… “

Fowl started sputtering, trying to backtrack.

“You’re fine. I understand, and maybe later. For now, let’s head home. I know we could use a good night's rest, and I want to let Everett know how things are.”

Summoning the dimensional space, he motioned for all of them to enter.

“I’ll teleport us home in a minute. If you’re okay with being inside.”

Cordellia nodded, letting Tanila lead her in by the hand, eyes still locked on the bow he had made her.

Fowl came up beside him as all three women made their way inside.

“So… any chance you’ll tell me?”

Smiling, he shook his head.

“No… but I’ll try to make something like hers for you later. Perhaps I can branch out if you end up with weapon mastery.”

Snorting, their warrior let out a sigh.

“You know… for a moment, I wasn’t sure how she would do… I can’t imagine what she’s endured and yet… to see that smile on her face after you gave her that weapon. It… it makes me think that Ockrim might love us all.”

Putting a hand on his friend's shoulder, Max gave him a gentle squeeze.

“I’d agree with that statement. Now, go inside and try to behave. I don’t want to lose my bet with Tanila.”

“Bet? About what?”

“How many times will Batrire hit you?”

Laughing, Fowl gave him a wink.

“I’ll see what I can do.”

Closing the space after they were all inside, Max turned to see Rakonath’s silver eyes fixed on him.

“You and them… it is a strange thing. That woman is hiding it well. You know that, though.”

“Who knew a dragon could read people so well?” Max asked, moving to the outstretched snout. “But you’re right. We all know it, and she must feel she has to be strong. I’m… I’m not sure how she’s going to handle it all. Tanila told me she will stay with her for a few nights. Something tells me Cordellia will need her more than I will.”

“You still feel ready to slaughter another hundred elves or more. I can sense it.”

Sighing, Max exhaled slowly.

“Right now, I’m about a moment from doing something I know I shouldn’t, but there is going to be a reckoning. Whoever was involved in this will learn what happens when you mess with my family.”

Spreading his wings and shifting slightly, Rakonath started to thrum. “It would appear that you are exactly like Aerthen said you were.”

“And what is that?”

“Dangerous,” his dragon replied. “A few months ago, she told me that the day you arrived in her home she was actually terrified. Not only did you bear our Father's mark, but you also gave off an aura she could detect.”

“What do you mean? Like the one from the tower?”

Shaking his head, Rakonath snorted, sending mucus flying.

“No. Those dragons you fought. Could you sense the danger they presented?”

Taking a moment, Max considered all the times he had looked upon Igarra, knowing she was dangerous. Even in the tower, when he faced Kuneoss, there was a presence.

“I could.”

“Do you sense that from Aerthen?”

Frowning, Max realized that he didn’t.

“No… why is that?”

“Because you are stronger than her, and you know it. You do not fear her. Deep down inside, you knew you could kill her if it were required. She knew that as well.

When we were attacked by Kemruss, I could sense his aura. We were outmatched only because Aerthen had to protect me. She chased him off and suffered for it. Somewhere out there, that gold dragon is most likely planning his return. And like you feel toward these elves, I feel the same about him."

"So you're going to kill him?"

A growl made Rakonath's lips rise, showing a maw full of teeth.

"I'm going to rip his wings apart, drive him to the ground and then tear out his heart. When I'm done with him, he'll learn the mistake he made that day. In the same way these elves are going to learn the mistake they made."

Max couldn't help but laugh, ignoring that his dragon was still growling, eyes narrowed slightly.

"You find this funny?"

Shaking his head, Max just smiled.

"No… far from it. I'm just laughing because you and I, it appears, are very much alike. Together, we will teach this world and everyone else that comes after us that we're not to be trifled with."

Rakonath stopped his growling and started to thrum again.

"Then let us head home. I can sense the plan you have already."

Putting his hand on the silver scale of his friend, Max felt his jaw tighten.

"You know me too well."

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"You can't do this!"

Max ignored the pair of elves trying to stop him, his foot connecting with the doors that groaned under the second kick he delivered.

They were beginning to buckle under the weight of their size, hinges having been torn from the stone.

"Do not get between me, or it will be your last mistake."

His voice felt dark, yet he didn't care.

Five elves were dead already, foolish enough to attack him. Each of them died to a single strike from his fist.

"But–"

"You're princess attacked my friend. She threatened my family. I am here for answers, and if you attempt to stop me, I shall consider you one of the zealots like those!"

His voice boomed out in the hallway, and the pair cowered.

Once more, he kicked the doors, causing them to split apart.

Behind them was Niccolo, frantically stuffing things in a pouch.

Max could see that something was in his hand.

[Demonic Teleportation]

His hand was a blur, his weapon passing through the elf's wrist, cutting off the hand that held a crystal shimmering with power.

Not missing a beat, Max caught the falling appendage and stored it.

As blood squirted from the wound, he withdrew a healing potion and held it out.

The Faction leader of the Enlightened Souls cried out in pain, dropping the pack he had been holding.

Max reached out, grabbed the older elf by the collar, and brought him before his face.

"Drink it, or I'll force it down your throat," he growled.

It took a moment for Niccolo to recover from the actions that transpired in less than two seconds.

"I…"

"DRINK!"

Without needing to be told again, the Faction leader grabbed the potion Max had used his thumb to uncork and drained it, causing his wound to start to regrowing his hand.

"That potion is worth more than you are, but I need you to understand that I will tear you apart and rebuild you countless times if you don't do what I say."

His sonar detected an arrow coming for him, and without looking back, Max's now free hand reached out, catching the arrow mid-flight.

Through the doors was an elven woman, her lips in a sneer as she began to lose another arrow at him.

[Stone Mastery]

The sound of her body being crushed between the stones he had pulled from the ceiling in the hallway and the floor echoed into the room.

He could feel the aura of an attacker, sensing the change in his body.

Shaking his head, Max turned his attention back to Niccolo.

"You and I need to talk, and I don't want to deal with all this."

A cry came from the older elf as he activated his Planetary Waypoint skill.

Links

//[2025-06-13 9:17]

[None]

[F7]7/480(1) Chapter 480 - Declaring War

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-13 16:00 [2025-06-13 9:15] [F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2353354/chapter-480-declaring-war;[F7]7/480(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-13 16:01],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-13 16:01],[Wayback_first2025-06-13 16:01],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-13 16:01],[this.word2025-06-13 16:02],[publish2025-06-13 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-13 16:00])Chapter 480 - Declaring War - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 480 - Declaring War

Max frowned as he studied Niccolo's face.

The elf's heart rate hadn't changed the entire time, letting him know that the Faction leader wasn't lying.

He wanted to shout, but having already destroyed a few trees to prove his point, Max didn't want to look like a pouting child.

Even though the older elf had pale skin, the blood drain was obvious.

He hadn't stopped trembling since they appeared in the forest, where he had spent time with Rakonath a while back.

"So… in a city you claim to be unaware of everything, the princess did things without your knowledge. That makes it seem like the royal family isn't happy with you."

"I… you… After what happened in the arena. The queen… she told me my time would come when a replacement was found. Now… I'm certain that time will come sooner than I had anticipated."

"It's been almost half a year. What do you mean that time will come sooner?"

“Time is different for us. Soon doesn’t mean a day, a week, or even a month.”

The older elf’s words rang true, and Max realized he was looking at the short term. Words from the tower and Chromie replayed in his mind.

Implications of actions that last generations and beyond… the elves are playing a long-term game. Is a year or even a decade really that long to them?

“So the rumors you heard then?”

“I couldn’t get anyone to confirm and just because I heard whispers of a princess in our city beyond the one you have in your party… I wouldn’t get involved with Atheila unless I had to. You know her reputation.”

Frowning, Max nodded.

“I’m not a fan of you. Do you realize that?”

Without waiting, the Faction leader nodded. “It’s obvious for many reasons.”

“Your people tried to kill me and my friends—”

“By order of the–”

Max’s hand slapped the older elf, cutting him off. “I don’t care who ordered it. You acted upon it. Even if your life is forfeited, that was a decision you made. Now you’re going to do something and before you tell me no, I will give you only one chance to make the right decision. Do you understand?”

Swallowing, Niccolo slowly nodded.

“We’re going to return to your Faction house. You’re going to raid the vault and give me whatever I want. And don’t think for a moment you’ll give me stuff from just one of the lesser or other vaults. I know about them all. Even the ones hidden by dimensional magic.”

His silver eyes widened.

“I… but that’s death…”

His voice was just a whisper, yet Max heard the fear conveyed in each word.

“Possibly. However, I’ll be kind and take you somewhere to hide from the King and Queen. Choose not to do what I say, and it’s an excruciating death. After that, I’ll find the next one who can do what I want. If I have to work my way through the entire Faction house, I will.”

“But… the aura… you’ll be hunted!”

Laughing, Max pointed at the trees that were standing upright in the field where he had driven them into the ground.

“Tell me, Niccolo. Who is going to stop me?”

For a moment, the Faction leader didn’t say a word as a gentle breeze blew across them. The sunlight slowly faded, and the sky turned into a beautiful shade of orange and red.

Eventually, Niccolo’s eyes found his.

“It would appear very few.”

Bobbing his head, Max let out a grunt.

“This means you need to decide how to proceed from this moment. But trust me when I say I’m the only one giving you a chance to live if you do what I say.”

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A little over a dozen more elves found themselves sent to the afterlife, each having learned the hard way that their weapons and spells didn’t affect him. Two managed to land a blow that scratched him, and both were burned beyond recognition.

“No more should bother us,” Niccolo stated as he locked the door behind them. “They can’t get through here.”

With a nod, Max’s frown never left his lips.

“Did you realize how many zealots you have in your Faction?”

“I… I don’t consider them what you call them. None of us do,” he replied, leading Max down a hallway. “You forget, we are taught—”

“To hate humans.”

His voice echoed off the white stone walls, and he saw Niccolo wince a little.

“Yes… but you have to understand what your people did–”

“It was two thousand years ago,” Max stated. “Two thousand years ago, a price was paid in blood. Your goddess has unleashed a cleansing on my kind for that long, and trust me when I say that nothing my people did could even compare to what yours are doing.”

He was shocked when the older elf spun around, nostrils flaring and a scowl appearing.

“Are you sure?! Were you there? No! Having lived as long as I have, you learn the history of what took place and for a moment our people were close to being wiped out!”

Flecks of saliva flew at him as a slender finger pointed at him.

“You…. your people murdered my kind and the dwarves with impunity. So many had to flee across the waters for safety. Most never returned, and now you come here, forcing me to betray my people and deciding to lecture me on who the villain is. Are you sure it’s not you?”

Max started to laugh. Inside him was a sensation of amusement at being called such a thing.

Oh Bob… how many times have we discussed this?

“If I must play that role to protect my friends and family,” he replied, leaning forward, stopping right before Niccolo’s finger was against his chest, “then I will be the greatest villain the elves have ever seen.”

The older elf started to speak, and Max swatted his hand away, shaking his head.

“I tried to live without retaliation, and you *know* how many times your people kept coming after me. Over and over, I looked the other way. I turned the other cheek. Yet not once did your people stop. Then your princess, Atheila Gilmenor, made the greatest mistake of your kind. She took one of my friends and held her captive. She took an elf and tortured her to lure me and another to a fight, hoping to kill us.”

He could see Niccolo leaning away from him. The entire being of the elf was trembling as it was Max’s turn to poke a finger in someone’s chest.

“We almost killed her, but she escaped by using an item. Otherwise, your people would have one less royal who seeks the blood of others. But if calling me a villain helps you feel better about yourself, know my name will be one every elven parent whispers to their children as a warning. They will make sure that your kind never seeks to kill us again. Doing so might summon me again, and a time might return where most of your people are wiped out.”

The sound of Niccolo swallowing seemed loud as his voice trailed off. “I… forgive me.”

Those words were a whisper as the Faction leader looked away and at the floor.

“Forgiveness isn’t coming, but you can earn freedom. Now hurry. I don’t have much time and must deal with other things.”

***

Macy and Molly both looked at each other. Each looked terrified, and Max couldn’t understand why they hadn’t learned yet.

His sudden appearance in their throne room, the binding of guards who had attempted to attack him with stone—none of this was new.

He let his aura go for a second, allowing them to sense how much stronger he had become. Their eyes widened to a whole new level.

“You don’t understand!” Macy proclaimed. “You are going to bring war and destruction upon us!”

“I’m doing this? The guy whom you both know was hunted by you and the elves? Are we not forgetting that you two allowed the elves to cull our people for more power? I know you can’t answer my question about what happened to your father, but tell me, do you honestly believe either of you has a chance of surviving without me?”

Macy’s red eyes glared at him while Molly stayed silent, her head slowly moving up and down.

“But the report! Your aura! How can you hope to survive?”

“He’s stronger than any of us,” Molly replied, answering her sister's question. “Who is going to stop him? Besides, we both know he’s right.”

Max watched as the pair stared at each other, sensing something taking place between them without words.

“Tell me, will you drag us into this, or are you here for a different reason?”

Smiling, he shrugged.

“You two can thank Everett. He is the one who told me I needed to inform you about what happened. While Factions aren’t supposed to get involved in wars or kingdom conflicts, we both know that hasn’t been something the elves have been honoring.

“Even if you can’t or won’t do anything when Savantus reaches out and demands or tells you something, let him know I’m coming to him. Tell him Max Hoste said that for every human he commands to be killed, I’ll do the same to his people, but at a scale he can’t imagine.”

“But the gods?!”

He shook his head at Macy, seeing the fear in her eyes.

“Why don’t you have a bloodline? Why hasn’t Phaius granted you his?”

She reacted as if he had slapped her, almost hitting her head against the ornate throne.

“What do you mean?!”

“Neither of you possesses the bloodline, and I’m guessing he may have offered it at some point. Yet it hasn’t come. Why is that?”

“You… you know about the bloodline?” Molly asked.

“I do, which should tell you more than I’m allowed to say. Now then, for the last time I will lay all my cards on the table and if you can’t tell that I’m serious by the red aura surrounding me right now, I won’t repeat myself.”

He took a few steps closer to where they both sat, each shifting on their thrones as he did so.

“All this,” Max said, motioning in every direction with his hands, “rests upon doing what I say. Go against me or attempt to deceive me, and I’ll not hesitate to end your lives and choose someone else to rule this kingdom until Phaius and I talk again.”

He smiled as both of their mouths fell open at his last words.

“I’m not threatening you… I am simply informing you of the consequences. Your bloodlust and appetite are going to end. Either learn to be queens who rule for the people and do what is right, or I’ll find someone who is willing. Do you understand?”

Macy’s face matched her eyes, and for a moment, he believed there might be one less queen in the kingdom.

Finally, she took a deep breath and simply nodded.

“You’ve changed Max Hoste…” Molly said. “What happened to the young boy who stood before us not long ago?”

“He grew up because people pissed him off. I’m done using a carrot. From now on, all I’ll use is a chopping block.”

Both seemed to unconsciously touch their neck slightly.

“Good. Now, then, I need to accomplish about a hundred other things. Just remember, I’m not in the mood and if I think you’ve acted wrong for a moment, I may overreact.”

With a snap of his finger for show, the stone bindings that had imprisoned the guards vanished before he moved to a window and jumped onto the sill.

“Behave or die. You decide.”

***

“How did that go?”

Max shrugged and looked over the paperwork he had drawn up.

“Everett, you and I both know neither of them are the queens we need, but if they screw up, you’re going to find yourself on that throne.”

“We both know I don’t want that job.”

“Still, until we find better, you’re the one I trust, and everyone in this city knows you have my complete support. Hopefully, they’ll be smart and grow up. If not…”

Sighing, he signed the papers before him and slid them across the desk to his Faction leader.

“What do you think the others will do?”

Taking the papers from him, Everett stored them before picking up the small glass of alcohol and downing it in a single gulp.

“No one is happy with what has happened. There is already a slight migration of adventurers who have left the other Factions. Some aren’t excited at the potential prospect of war, yet none doubt the power you and your team have.”

A rolled-up parchment appeared in his hand, and a second later, the map of all the known lands was before them on Everett’s desk.

“With Dagon most likely supporting you, or willing to stay out of this fight, it becomes a two-kingdom battle. Know that once this letter reveals what the elves were doing to our people, you’ll have a short window to solve some things before many demand action.”

“This is why I specifically state that anyone who decides to cause problems will deal with me.”

Everett grunted. “You can’t face the entire world on your own. You know that.”

Max grinned. “That’s the thing. I’m not alone, and you know it.”

Links

//[2025-06-13 16:02]

[None]

[F7]8/480a(1) Chapter 480a – Questions

[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2356184/chapter-480a-questions; [F7]8/480a(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:34],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:34],[Wayback_first2025-06-17 8:34],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-17 8:32],[this.word2025-06-17 8:43],[publish2025-06-14 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-14 16:00])Chapter 480a - Questions - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 480a - Questions

Over and over, the thread pulsed with power, and Bob couldn’t help but smile.

You’re out there killing people, Max… what in the world is happening outside of here?

The prison he was held in felt smaller as each surge of energy coursed through the connection. He had been surprised at how many continued to come, well over thirty in what seemed like such a short time.

A crack had formed where the thread came through, and he chose to study it, not trying to push too much and draw attention to the weakened state.

How many more are going to die by your hand? I can only imagine what you are feeling.

Rage and anger flooded through the bond, and Bob realized there was a danger to what was happening on the other side.

These fools… thinking it’s safer to keep me locked up in here and separated from you. To know that if this continues, then…

He paused that thought, and a fear struck him for the first time in so long as pieces seemed to fall into place.

Do they desire that hunger? Are they the reason why I have always been so focused on simply killing and destroying everything? If that is their goal for myself and the other two, what do they fear about me being how I am?

With nothing but time on his hands, Bob started to consider all the potential reasons why the system seemed to want Max like this and nothing he came up with left him in a good mood.

Max… be smart. Remember who you are.

Links

//[2025-06-17 8:43]

[None]

[F7]9/481(1) Chapter 481 - Questions Only a God Can Answer

[F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2358417/chapter-481-questions-only-a-god-can-answer; [F7]9/481(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:35],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:35],[Wayback_first2025-06-17 8:35],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-17 8:33],[this.word2025-06-17 8:50],[publish2025-06-15 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-15 16:00])Chapter 481 - Questions Only a God Can Answer - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 481 - Questions Only a God Can Answer

“How is she?”

Tanila just hugged him for a few more seconds.

“Cordellia is… hurting, but she is trying to be strong. She broke down once after waking up screaming. Batrire and I took turns being in there with her. I’m unsure how she will manage, but I know we can’t leave her alone.”

“Never again,” Max said quietly, gently stroking the gold hair that glowed. “Let’s give her a day or two, and then we’ll attempt to complete a tower floor. I need to work on a few items, and the next few days will be… messy.”

Loosening the embrace a little, Tanila looked at him and frowned.

“Messy? Things are already messy. If I didn’t want to keep myself from being flagged like you, I might cause some problems. Still… how are things with Bob?”

Sighing, Max shook his head.

“I got like fifty notifications that Consume is still locked. No stats, no skills. Part of me didn’t expect anything, but I did have a little hope that something might come through.”

“And the queens?”

“Behaving… for now. How long till I should expect something from your father?”

Chewing on her lip for a few seconds, Tanila’s gold eyes darted back and forth.

“If Atheila told him about you and me and our child… It won’t be long. He’ll have to act. I’m guessing he will reach out to Thuyja and have a quick conversation. Depending on how that goes…”

“Which is why I’m about to head to the temple myself. Phaius and I need to talk.”

Lying her head back against his shoulder, Max felt her squeeze a little tighter than normal.

“Tell me this is all worth it… you… You’re my everything, and suddenly it feels like the world… no, so many worlds and gods are against us. Even the tower.”

With learned practice, Max gently massaged her neck with his fingers, holding her tight.

“The day you told me you loved me, I swore to you that no matter what, I’d protect you. I made a promise, and I intend to keep it. I'll find a way to destroy anyone or anything that stands in the way of that.”

Giving her a gentle kiss on her head, he grinned.

“Now then, if you don’t mind letting me go, I need to try and summon a god… or two.”

***

“Boy, you make my life difficult, do you know that?”

Max nodded at the older woman who sat beside him, eyes still closed but able to sense the wry smile on her lips.

“Mother–”

“Kathleen… please, hearing that from you sounds wrong.”

“Kathleen… I had considered trying to sneak my way inside the temple, but knew it wasn’t the best option either. As we already discussed, me suddenly appearing, this red glow around me would have caused a few people to overreact, and I’d rather not kill anyone I don’t have to.”

“Yes… Word has spread already. Many more than usual are coming to the temple, praying to Phaius. Everyone can sense the tension, and so many look to you as some kind of… savior?”

Sighing, Max opened an eye and studied the older woman. Her white hair seemed to shine and her blue eyes were locked on him.

“I’m no savior… I’m just a man who wants to protect the people he loves and everyone else who is innocent.”

“Which none of us are,” she replied after snorting. “You know that as well as anyone.”

Closing his eyes, Max shrugged.

“Children are… that for me is enough. Now tell me, do you have any advice for me?”

She shook her head.

“Don’t die. This world needs you.”

“I’m trying my best not to die. Still… I need Phaius to hurry up. Time isn’t something I have a lot of.”

Her laugh seemed strange to him, and Max could sense she was amused.

“Time? You’re talking to a woman old enough to have seen you live and die at least twice from old age. We’ve been here less than an hour, and you’re already anxious. Do not forget he has many worlds, and we cannot fathom what is happening across them all.”

Many worlds... and to think that Phaius is a small god... weaker than Ockrim... a lot weaker than Thuyja... what does it take to acquire all that he has?

“Kathleen… I have a question since you brought it up. Do you know how many worlds Phaius is part of?”

He could sense her frown, jaw muscles tightening as she kept looking at him, unaware that even with his eyes closed, he saw her better than with them open.

“No… I just know there are others. Those things are beyond my knowledge and scope. My task is to simply be the one who –”

She stopped speaking as a light appeared on the other side of the room and quickly dropped from the bench they were sitting on, putting her forehead to the stone floor.

“You can rise.”

Max opened both eyes and saw the god he had reached out to walk through the portal, an expression of displeasure etched upon Phaius’s face.

“It is an honor to serve. I shall leave you two.”

Kathleen stayed low, bent over, and made her way to the door, her head lifting upwards just enough for her to gaze upon the one she served.

Still sitting, Max tapped the bench next to him and smiled.

“I appreciate you coming. Part of me wasn’t sure.”

A low growl came from the god who pulled out a crystal chair and sat facing him.

“It was evident that you were reaching out from the amount of power she offered. While I appreciate that gift, you are not making my life easy. What have you been doing?”

“How am I causing problems? Are you talking about things outside of this world?”

Phaius closed both eyes and ran his hand down his face twice before grunting.

“You… I can sense the aura so I know you’ve passed the 60th floor. That means there are some things we can speak of now that I couldn’t before, but much is still off limits. The world you were a champion of… that is no longer the case, yet your name has spread across many worlds. I have been ‘ *granted audiences* ’ with gods who never knew my name. What you possess within you is no longer a secret, and rumors are spreading, alliances are being forme,d and chaos is–”

As if he had reached across the space and wrapped both hands around the god's neck, words suddenly stopped coming from Phaius.

Coughing once, the god frowned.

“I cannot speak on that. Now then, tell me… why am I here?”

“Let me give you the quick version.”

***

Phaius stared at the drink in his hand, having sipped it once and already commented on it being a lesser drink to him.

“So… another war with the elves. That would explain some of the problems with Thuyja… still Ockrim is with us last I spoke with him.”

“As I mentioned, he is next on my list of gods to hopefully visit with.”

Bobbing his head, Phaius tapped his leg with a few fingers.

“He should come. He knows how important you are.”

“You keep saying that but can’t expound upon it.”

“Rules… soon you shall find yourself bound by more rules than you can imagine. Had I known that so many would have been forced upon me, I might have instead chosen not to become what I am. Still, you already know what I’m going to say.”

“The tower… I need to keep going.”

“Power comes through it. It sets the stage for the future. You cannot imagine your potential because of… your skill.”

“Which you can’t talk about.”

Phaius nodded.

“I’m walking a fine line as it is. There is… a limit, and I can sense how close I am to stepping over it and experiencing the consequences for that. So instead, focus on what we can do right now. Thuyja… she is going to come for you…”

“Yet you said she cannot stop me.”

“Which is why it will be once again through your allies. This city provides them protection. Leave it, and the small amount it provides will be gone. Enter her domain, and I cannot assist there.”

“Would she intervene? I mean, if we were fighting inside the city?”

Spinning the cup slowly, Phaius stared at it momentarily, watching the caramel liquid move around in the glass.

“Possibly… it would take much for me to come to my city, but if someone like you were here, waging a war against my people… the choices would be limited. There are none strong enough here to stop you. Those two… part of me has often wondered if allowing them to continue ruling was wise. Now I am considering taking their life myself.”

“Now isn’t the time and we both know it.”

Smiling, Phaius nodded. “You are wise for someone so young. Perhaps you learned the lessons well from… Chromie, was it?”

“I don’t think he appreciates that name, but yes. The repercussions of that action would make the coming months harder on your people. Perhaps they will finally learn to rule as they should have been all along.

“But bloodlines… You cannot tell me more?”

“All I can do is confirm what you already said. You are on your way to acquiring one… much quicker than most and yet… as you stated, the way you have acquired them is unique.”

“And the bonus of your bloodline?”

“I cannot share that detail. It is something very helpful to the one who possesses it.”

“Not as powerful as the elves?” Max asked.

Wincing, Phaius shook his head. “Different. Each one is different. The two you mentioned are ones I’m not sure what they provide, but both would have great potential. I will try to ask around and see if I can acquire any knowledge of what you have done and what it might lead to. But again…”

He tapped his throat.

“Rules,” Max muttered.

“Rules.”

Both men sat there a moment in silence.

“What’s wrong? You’re not telling me something.”

Max’s thumbs rubbed against each other as his hands rested on his legs.

“My skill is locked… it did something, allowing me to take my dragon–”

“YOUR DRAGON?!”

The crystal chair fell over, bouncing off the stone floor, and Phaius was on his feet, eyes wide, staring at him.

“Oh… I guess I forgot to mention that. Surely, one of the other gods would have mentioned that. Yeah, I have one I’m bound to.”

Groaning, the god picked up his chair and stored it, pacing the room for a moment, muttering something under his breath.

“Having a dragon isn’t a bad thing, is it? Dagon seemed–”

“The dwarf king? That means… OCKRIM KNOWS?!”

Phaius’s voice shook the whole room, and Max wondered if others in the building could sense the vibration.

“Uh… maybe? I’m guessing that Dagon would mention it to Ockrim if they spoke.”

“I’m so going to stick my foot up…”

Taking a deep breath, it took a few more before Phaius could calm down.

“No… having a dragon isn’t bad at all… being bound to one… tells me I’ve been played for a fool. So many things now make sense, and there will be a conversation with another god and for once I might actually come out ahead.”

“Ahead?”

Waving off Max’s question, Phaius started to smile.

“You have no idea and won’t until you complete the tower. But returning to what you said before, your skill is locked?”

“Yeah… since it allowed my dragon to enter the tower with us, I can’t get skills anymore, and it says it’s locked.”

Max watched as a different kind of frown appeared on his current companion.

“That’s… not good. I can try to… no, actually I can’t. Doing so would bring attention to both of us in a way I doubt we want. Perhaps the one whom I’m guessing allowed you to bind yourself to a dragon can help.”

“You know him?”

Phaius grunted and nodded.

“Oh… I know him… but if what you say is true… I need to leave. There are so many pieces in play, and I cannot keep my eye on all of them.”

Pointing a finger at the corner of the room, Phaius snapped his fingers and pointed once more.

“Get in the tower. Get stronger. With what is coming, you need not delay.”

“I know… but I was going to visit Ockrim if possible.”

Shaking his head, the human god took a few steps backward, and a portal appeared behind him.

“No… I’ll deal with him. Get in the tower, Max. You need to complete it.”

With those words said, Phaius stepped through the portal, leaving him alone in the room.

Oh Bob… nothing’s ever easy, is it?

Links

//[2025-06-17 8:50]

[None]

[F7]10/482(1) Chapter 482 - New Floors [F7]1) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2360769/chapter-482-new-floors; [F7]10/482(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:35],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-17 8:35],[Wayback_first2025-06-17 8:35],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-17 8:34],[this.word2025-06-17 9:01],[publish2025-06-16 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-16 16:00])Chapter 482 - New Floors - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

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/*[L1,L2,L3,L4,L5]*/

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Chapter 482 - New Floors

Max watched as the rest of his party stood beside him, everyone doing their best not to focus on Cordellia, who was holding Tanila's hand, ignoring the comedy taking place around them.

"You understand that I'm technically supposed to ask you to refrain from entering the tower, sir?"

Nodding, he glanced at the pair of guards who had not approached any of them when they got out of the carriage.

Every other party present had moved to the side.

"I do. And you know that we're still going to enter the tower."

A snort came from a dwarf in another party behind them.

"Just doing my job, sir. Please understand I mean no disrespect."

Max smiled, watching as the younger man winced a little after he did so.

"I wouldn't expect anything less. Besides, I already sent a letter to your captain. She knows where to find me."

With that, Max touched the portal and selected the 70th floor.

He first noticed a crystal circle surrounding them about twenty yards away. They were in an enclosed dome, and beyond it lay a hallway made of green, worked stone which appeared to lead into a dungeon-looking area.

"Well, that's not what I expected," Fowl said. "I guess I should say I hoped for some large open space."

"Why?"

Their warrior looked at him and shrugged.

"Easier to get through. These underground ones have been difficult lately."

“They’ve all been difficult,” Batrire said as everyone came to stand near the circle's edge. “Did you see if there are rewards yet?”

Shaking his head, Max motioned at the two elves.

“I wanted to wait for everyone.”

Bending down, he touched the crystal and felt its power run through him.

[Tower Floor 70 Reached]

[Completion of Tower Floor 69 Achieved]

[Full Level of Tower Experience Granted]

[Calculating Results of Previous Floors]

[…]

[…]

[Results Totaled]

[Full Level Experience Granted & Skill Gem x3]

[Error - Experience denied]

[No Replacement given for lost experience]

[Determining Skill Gem based on current skills]

[…]

[…]

[Current Skills are varied. Special Gem Given]

[Skill Gem Granted - Epic Rank - Random Skill Granted upon use]

[Skill Gem Granted - Epic Rank - Random Skill Granted upon use]

[Skill Gem Granted - Epic Rank - Random Skill Granted upon use]

[Crafting Item - Legendary Ore]

[Crafting Item - Legendary Ore]

[Crafting Item - Legendary Bone]

[Potion - Elixir of Stats x3]

A murmur from the others came as the items spilled out onto the stone floor.

“That’s a lot of items,” Fowl said. “I guess we shouldn’t complain at all.”

Nodding, Max quickly stored the crafting items, his skill telling him that both of the ores had some uses for armor and weapons, while the bone was not usable at all by him.

Glancing at the skill shards in his hand, Max considered their potential use now that Bob was locked.

I'd never have considered even using these, especially with my sister and her needs... but now...

"What's on your mind?" Tanila asked as she collected the items awarded to her.

"Just wondering what using one of these might be like. I mean the skill could be anything and with Bob being how he is… I'm wondering if I should keep saving them for Stacy or use one myself."

"Do you think it would be anything worthwhile?"

He shrugged and saw their mage studying him.

"Well if the gods loved me–"

"Which we know some do," Fowl quickly stated.

Clearing his throat, Max frowned at his friend but otherwise ignored him. "If they love me, could I get a skill worth using? I mean, the odds of that are likely slim, but part of me wants to try. The other part of me knows how valuable they are for my sister."

The sound of a moan came as Cordellia crushed one between her fists.

Green magic ran up her arm, and she smiled at them.

She doesn't look half bad in that outfit even though it's a mismatch of so many things.

Max knew their archer was frustrated at the loss of her gear. If the elven King ever managed to unbind the items inside it, they would have a major upgrade to anyone who got their hands on the gear the tower had given them.

Storing the shards for now, he stood up holding the three elixirs in his hands and moved to where Cordellia was.

"Take these."

Both of her eyes narrowed and she frowned.

"I'm not looking for handouts."

"And I'm not offering one," Max replied, extending his hands again. "You lost a lot of stats with your gear being taken. If you've learned anything about how I operate, I give my stuff to the weakest party member to help shore up those spots. Since Fowl's not in last place anymore, you need these. Now stop looking like you sucked on a lemon and take these."

He watched as Cordellia started to say something and then stopped.

A few seconds passed, and she glanced past him at the others watching.

“You’re serious. Just like that? Three elixirs even when you know what they could do for your sister?”

“Need I remind you that you’re family?” His words caused her to swallow and a grunt to escape as if someone had almost punched her.

“No… I just–”

“Then take it. Family helps each other, and you know it. I’m not here to baby you or carry you. We both know that isn’t what you want, but our options are limited.”

With a sigh, their archer gave a small nod and took the three elixirs from him.

“Thank you. I mean it.”

Her brown eyes held his gaze, and he smiled, gently patting her arm.

After she had given up her reservations at not taking them, the other three had all moved forward, each holding out a single elixir.

“You three are going to make me cry,” Cordellia stated. “Still… thank you to all of you.”

“Don’t thank me,” Fowl replied, handing her one. “I just don’t want to start winning when it comes to killing things.”

She snorted and shook her head.

“You’re amazing,” Tanila whispered as she waited her turn.

“I know,” Max replied, wanting to laugh as she rolled her eyes.

Everyone started drinking their elixirs and using their skill shards, and Max couldn’t help but smile when Fowl started doing a little dance, having acquired a fourth melee weapon skill and the famed Weapon Mastery ability.

“Perhaps now we can give you a good sword,” he stated as they prepared to head deeper into the tower floor.”

“I won’t say no,” their warrior replied. “Part of me can’t wait to bash something.”

***

A groan came from Fowl as the portal appeared in the middle of the room they were all in.

“Finally! No more puzzles,” the dwarf exclaimed. “My head is still hurting!”

Max said nothing as his friend moved toward the portal just a dozen yards away.

“He isn’t wrong,” Tanila said. “This last one was brutal.”

Nodding, he studied the four massive statues of wizards in their large circular room. Slowly, the runes along their base faded, and the truth was none of the puzzles they had faced in the last two days had been easy.

“Who would have imagined each of those statutes needed sound to react?” Max said. “And then there was the stupid pattern recognition and having to move as one.”

“You all should have given Fowl a potion after he tripped and stepped on the wrong one, resetting everything,” Cordellia called out from her side of the room.

Smiling, Max laughed, and they all made their way to the blue portal, ready for whatever came next.

“You got to be crapping me,” Fowl said as he pointed at the giant beanstalk that wound upward into the cloud.

“Is that… a beanstalk?” Batrire asked.

“Max… do you think you could fly up there and see?”

He could sense all of them starting to look at him, but his eyes weren’t focused on the obvious part of this tower floor.

All around were farms, and he could see houses and what looked like people working from far away.

Other than the portal behind them, they appeared to be in the countryside of some kingdom. Green grass, trees, crops that looked ready to harvest, and animals were all in his line of sight.

“I see it as well,” Cordellia said, following his gaze. “Someone or something is out there, and we’re in the middle of a giant valley.”

He knew she was right, though valley was maybe not the right term. Massive mountains rose up on both sides, and there were easily twenty miles or more between them. A river cut through the lush landscape, and far off in the direction they had been facing upon appearing here was what looked like a larger city.

“So… what’s the plan?” Fowl asked. “We staying or taking a break?”

“We’ve talked about this,” Max replied. “The point of everything was to come into the tower and get stronger. Even though I know you all have a full level of experience, beyond that, we have nothing to show for the last two days.”

“Well, we did get 1% to all stats and .5% for our dragon and demon blessings,” Batrire said.

Smacking his lips, Max nodded.

“Still… something about this seems off. I mean, after an entire tower floor dedicated to puzzles, part of me knows we’re supposed to look at that beanstalk and ask what’s up with that. The other part of me feels it’s too obvious and perhaps not what we think it is.”

“So we what? Ignore the giant green thing growing up from the ground and vanishing into the clouds and check out the city below?” Fowl asked.

“Maybe?” Max replied. “Either way we’ll need to–”

His words were cut off as the blue sky filled with soft clouds and a gentle breeze immediately began to change. As if someone had cast a spell, the clouds began to streak across the sky, turning dark, and a fierce wind blew from every direction.

“What in the–”

Fowl stopped talking as a peal of thunder rang out and echoed around the valley.

Large raindrops began to fall from the sky, a torrential downpour starting immediately as the sky grew dark.

Rivets of water began to flow around their feet, moving down from the small elevated place where they stood. Only then did Max notice how many of the paths where the water was flowing were already formed.

Without waiting, he summoned an Air wall above them and a Stone wall behind him.

“Thanks!” Batrire shouted as she donned a cloak and hood, pulling it over her hair. “So now what?”

He glanced at Tanila and saw her chewing on her lip, her gold eyes scanning the storm that was building around them.

“Something's wrong… I can feel it,” she said after a few moments. “It’s definitely a magic thing. Look, all that storm is centered around the beanstalk.”

Everyone looked where she was pointing and saw that the clouds had gathered around that spot and circled it like vultures over a dead carcass.

“My mind is fried,” Fowl muttered. “You just tell me what you all want to do. If we head to the city, can I be lazy and ask to ride inside your storage space? I’d prefer not to get soaked if I don’t have to.”

“So, what, only I’m supposed to get wet?” Max asked as he began to open his dimensional space.

“Please,” their warrior teased. “We all know you can control water and out of all of us, this storm will impact you the least. Besides unless you want to play ‘ *chase the dwarf* ’ as we slide down a hill or something in this weather, it’s better for you to have us tucked away somewhere nice and dry.”

Rolling his eyes, Max motioned to the open doorway.

“Get inside, I’ll head toward that city.”

Tanila held back as the other three went in, stroking his cheek with her thumb.

“You’re not going to explore the beanstalk first?”

Grinning leaned toward her and kissed her.

“You know me too well, don’t you?”

Links

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[L1] https://m.media-amazon.com/images/I/81yza9gVtrL._SL1500_.jpg

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0F5BV583P

[L3] https://mattdudleydrumming.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/amazon-kindle-logo.png

[L4] https://goldfinchpublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Button-Retailer-580x280-Audible.png

[L5] https://www.audible.com/pd/B0FBMQK1R7

[F7]11/483(1) Chapter 483 - Max and the Beanstalk

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-06-17 16:00 [2025-06-17 8:39] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2363661/chapter-483-max-and-the-beanstalk; [F7]11/483(1[this.Waybak= 2 2025-06-18 12:31],[word.Waybak=2 2025-06-18 12:31],[Wayback_first],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-18 12:31],[this.word2025-06-18 12:32],[publish2025-06-17 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-17 16:00])Chapter 483 - Max and the Beanstalk - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1,L2]*/

Boundless Cultivation - [Isekai Progression Fantasy with Light LitRPG Elements][L2]

Chapter 483 - Max and the Beanstalk

Max couldn’t help but smile as he flew through the air, his Wind Mastery directing his path while the Elemental Essence Mastery allowed him to divert all the rain near him.

Just how big is this stupid beanstalk?

He flew around it in circles, noticing that someone had carved out stairs along the inside. No rain seemed to strike that section, bouncing off the lush green outside.

So with at least a mile or two into the sky, people are climbing up this thing to do what?

Considering the possibilities, he flew upward, trying to see if anyone was coming up or down the giant plant.

The closer Max got to the clouds, the wind began to dissipate, and the rain that fell lessened as the clouds drew tight around the beanstalk. However, each cloud that touched it was whiter and puffier.

Reaching the top, he reached out with his hand.

“What in the gods…”

The soft appearance of the cloud didn’t move at all. Instead, it was just as hard as a stone.

Moving a foot away, he smirked and then punched the outside.

No movement came from the cloud, and his hand sent the shock of being stopped radiating up his arm briefly.

Looking to his right, Max saw the staircase on the stalk and flew toward it, surprised that nothing stopped him from reaching the stairs. Within a few seconds he found himself poking out of the top of the clouds, finding an entirely different world than the one below.

Gigantic buildings, all made of metal, might have been the first thing to surprise him if he had not seen one like this before.

Instead it was the sight of oversized chickens, massive cows, and other animals, all shaped like finely crafted automatons.

“What in the world is this?”

Even though no one was around, his mouth couldn't hold back the shock at what he witnessed. Everything looked at least ten times the size of the normal creature or building he was used to.

If those things are this big… then how big must whatever lives inside the building be?

His intellect helped him calculate just how large the door to the oversized dwelling was. It had to be close to two hundred feet, and the roof had to reach much higher into the perfectly blue sky.

Part of him wanted to keep exploring but the other part, who had promised his allies he wouldn’t, held him back.

Instead, he turned and descended the steps carved into the beanstalk, watching the rain continue falling like liquid sheets on the landscape. Seeing anything was impossible, as the downpour was too thick. With nowhere to go, he summoned his dimensional storage and entered, smiling at them all.

“So… what did you find?” Fowl asked, holding a drink in a hand as he reclined in a chair off to the side.

“I reached the beanstalk, and I went into the clouds–”

“Of course you did,” Cordellia muttered.

“But, I didn’t go any further. I returned and couldn’t see anything as the storm was too strong. So I figured I’d come in here and see if you all wanted to check out the part inside the clouds.”

“The way you’re smiling,” Tanila said as she cocked her head slightly, “makes me wonder what we’re going to find.”

“Only one way to see,” Max replied as he motioned to the steps outside his dimensional space.

He couldn’t help himself, laughing as all four had cursed, seeing the animals grazing on the metallic ground.

“What are they eating? Is that… metal grass?” Fowl asked.

“It appears so,” Max said. “I didn’t go past this point, and I think you can all imagine how hard it was for me not to. Now then, do we want to explore or wait for the storm to stop and then see what we can find out below?”

“You’re thinking about what Chromie said, aren’t you?” Batrire asked.

“I am. If we go in there and find something that looks scary or gets aggressive, we all know it will end in a fight. Judging from the size of things out here, I’d rather not have to have that if we don’t need to. I figure the best option is to figure out what this floor is all about.”

“Like a test?” their warrior asked. “I mean, do you think this is another test?”

“I think they’re all tests,” Max replied. “If I had to guess, everything we face from this point on has to have a reason, and it can’t just be to grind experience. We level up… well you all level up each time we pass a tower floor. We also gain full experience in the tower floor level. We haven’t gotten gems in a while.”

“Which means we can’t farm our tower experience,” Fowl muttered. “Something else we were lied to about.”

Nodding, Max and the rest learned that after they had been *judged* the floors after level 60 couldn’t be entered again. Now they were all locked out of anything past the 59th.

Something else Everett and the rest really need to know.

“I think we’re forgetting what Chromie told us,” Max said. “We’re being trained for after the tower. Everything has a reason and we can assume nothing. A floor before this with puzzles that required all of us to work together. What purpose could that have? I don’t have a clue, but I know–”

He stopped talking as the door to the house swung open, a loud boom sounding as a shape appeared.

“Good gods, it’s huge,” Fowl muttered.

Moving out of the doorway was an automaton resembling a giant gnome. In its right hand was a staff of some kind. Blue eyes swept across the area, and then the automaton lifted the staff into the air, a bolt of energy shooting from it into the blue sky. A loud boom came, and then the giant gnome turned, moved back into the house, and closed the door.

“What was that?” Cordellia asked.

“Hopefully not the boss,” Batrire stated. “It could squash us with a step.”

Max frowned, and as the others continued to speak, turned, jogging to the stairs and went down a few, peeking out below the clouds and saw that the storm was gone.

“Uh… guys… I think it changed the weather,” he called out after returning. “You need to see this.”

Everyone followed him to the stairs, moving down them and peering across the land.

Below them, large sections of land were now covered in water, and entire farms were seemingly swept away or submerged. Forests looked like ponds with plants growing out of them from up here.

“Did it cause this? I mean… did it flood the land?” Fowl asked.

“No clue,” Max replied. “But I think we need to check out the city and see what we can find. Someone surely must need help.”

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Flying over the water, Max was surprised to find that no one was in sight at first. Eventually, as he drew closer to the town, he saw a large collection of boats, all in different shapes and sizes, floating near the stone walls that surrounded the city.

He could see ropes connected to them and the walls.

Without drawing closer, he opened his dimensional storage and showed the others what was below.

“It seems they’re prepared for this,” Tanila stated. “From the looks of the way they are handling this flooding, it must happen often.”

“But why?” Cordellia asked. “I mean… how can they survive like this?”

“Something tells me this is where we come in,” Max said. Let me close this, and I’ll go to the walls. You see the gate and road on the one side that’s above the water. It's probably the best spot for us to show ourselves.”

As they walked along the stone path, the sound of water rushing near them was almost overwhelming. Underneath were giant intake areas, draining the water from one side and sending it down the other side, racing toward a section further away in the valley.

“Definitely not their first time,” Tanila said as she pointed to all the stone aqueducts that helped control the water flow. “They are extremely used to this and prepared for it. I can’t imagine how long it took to build all those things.”

Upon getting within fifty yards of the gate, it began to open and a group of guards in green armor moved toward them.

“Those aren’t people,” Cordellia whispered. “They’re–”

“Greetings!” the closest guard called out, the metallic sound of its voice reaching them. “Champions! You have come to aid us!”

Max saw that he wasn’t the only one in shock at the appearance of the group coming toward them. All five moved with speed and grace that didn’t fit the idea he had in his head.

Robots? Automatons? What kind of creatures are these?

Two were elvish in nature, another two looked humanism and the one that had spoken appeared to be a dwarf judging by the beard it wore.

“Uh… that was a lot of rain,” Max said as the group got close. “Are you expecting us to help with your problem?”

A frown appeared on all five of their faces, making him wonder how their metallic and robotic faces could look so lifelike and filled with emotion.

“Indeed! You are tower climbers, are you not?!” the dwarf exclaimed.

“We are…” Batrire said slowly. “How do you know that?”

All five of the guards started to laugh. “You are bags of flesh. Only bags of flesh come from the tower. Now, come, let us welcome you into our city and tell you what must be done to stop this problem of ours.”

As one, all the guards turned and began to move back toward the city, leaving them standing there behind them.

“I guess we follow?” Fowl asked.

“It appears so,” Max replied.

They quickly caught up behind the guards, who had never turned back to check on them. The five walked in unison.

Only their facial features are different. Each of them are the same size and build. Are these really…

His mind stopped as they got their first glance inside the stone walls.

Every part of the city looked like a normal town, with stone streets and buildings. Metallic dogs, cats, and other small animals were around. The sounds of laughter came from what appeared to be children, each smaller than the five guards who had greeted them.

“What in the gods…” Fowl said.

“I was going to say that,” Batrire muttered.

“Max…”

Shrugging at their archer who was looking at him, he tried to understand what he saw.

“Please do not stop. Our master will want to meet you and welcome you to our home!” the dwarven guard called out. “Please, we should hurry! Time is always a rare thing.”

Shaking his head, Max motioned for everyone to follow but saw that Tanila was looking at the children playing, her brow scrunched up slightly.

“You okay?”

She nodded as she bit her lip.

“They… look… and act like real children,” Tanila whispered. “I mean… just look.”

He saw what she was talking about: a group of children playing tag, screaming and laughing as they darted and weaved around adults and boxes stacked up along a sidewalk.

“Can… can they be alive?”

He shrugged and reached for her hand, squeezing it.

“As we said, the tower is going to blow our minds. I’m certain this isn’t the craziest thing we’ve ever seen.”

Turning a street corner, Max immediately realized he was on the right track.

A large stone building was about a mile away at the end of the street.

On both sides of the street were lamp posts with green banners hanging from each one.

A goblin wearing spectacles and a mechanical top hat, one he recognized from the planet Nimyn had fled to, was displayed in a metallic image.

That is the ugliest goblin I have ever seen... Damnit Bob... you’re missing out.

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1]

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/101946-boundless-cultivation-isekai-progression.jpg?time=1737216131

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/101946/boundless-cultivation-isekai-progression-fantasy

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[F7]12/484(1) Chapter 484 - Goblins and Tutus

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-18 16:00 [2025-06-18 12:34]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2366091/chapter-484-goblins-and-tutus;
[F7]12/484(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-18 16:02],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-18 16:02],[Wayback_first2025-06-18 16:02],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-18 16:00],[this.word2025-06-18 16:01],[publish2025-06-18 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-18 16:00])Chapter 484 - Goblins and Tutus - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 484 - Goblins and Tutus

“All bow in the presence of Grand Lord Zenk!”

Max and the rest looked at each other before slightly bending their heads as they stared at the goblin who sat on a stone throne. His red eyes stared at them behind a pair of spectacles.

His clothes seemed to shimmer, black fabric that went well with his light green skin. His top hat gears moved, and a variety of lights illuminated them, drawing one's eyes to them constantly.

“Tower climbers, welcome!” Zenk said as he rose from his chair.

Max had already warned Fowl and Cordellia, who he saw were biting their lips.

The apparent ruler of this city and *Grand Lord* was standing on a stone block, making him seem taller than the four feet he was otherwise.

“Thank you for the welcome,” Max said, giving another small neck bend. “Tell us, what seems to be the problem your guards said we might help you with?”

A bigger grin appeared as the goblin rubbed his hands together.

“Yes! Such wonderful citizens I have! They get straight to the point and understand the blessing that you all are! Tell me, have you ever encountered any beings so far in your travels like my children?”

Something about how he spoke would have made Max’s hair rise if he had had any.

His children... does this mean he can create these things?

“Nothing as fine as the ones before us,” Max replied. “I did visit a world and saw some… automatons and robots–”

“Bah! Do not use that word!” Zenk snapped as the expressions changed on every guard that was present.

Each of them scowled, and he was certain one had spat after hearing the last one.

“My children are not such filthy and worthless things! No! They are alive, and each has its own volition! No mindless tool that can only accomplish a single task or two!”

His voice carried over the dozen yards between them, and Max could sense his friends shifting as they stood there.

“Forgive me, I didn’t know. As I had mentioned, I only saw some of those lesser ones. Nothing near as… perfect as your children.”

A smile appeared on all the guards and the goblin, his head bobbing at Max’s words.

“And you shall most likely never see such greatness again. For I am one of the gifted! Touched by my god with the knowledge of the spark of life.”

Hopping off the stone block, Zenk made his way to where the party stood and snapped his finger.

A creature resembling a goblin, the only one Max could sense or see, came moving from the side. The stone block in its hands was set down before the Grand Lord.

Zenk stepped up, rising to match his height and stared at them.

“So… the trouble the tower has sent you to help with. No doubt you endured the rain that tries to wash us away. The beanstalk, you have seen it as well?”

“We did,” Tanila said, not flinching when the goblin’s gaze snapped in her direction a single eyebrow raising.

“And did you go up it yet?”

Something inside warned him, and Max could feel the goblin's hat moving slightly faster, the gears turning just a bit more rapidly than before.

“We did. It was a very long climb.”

Grunting, the goblin scowled.

“Did you see the land that is above? Such a horrible place! The monster that lives there comes out whenever it wishes, causing the weather to change and to assault us with a variety of things. Rain is only one of the many tools it has employed to try and get us to leave this wonderful place.”

He snapped one of his green fingers and smiled, all of his teeth displayed with a massive grin.

“Your mission is to climb it again and destroy the monstrous abomination! Do that, and we shall be free of its curse! Do that, and I shall reward you all!”

He waved his hands in the air, and a trio of guards moved forward, a chest in each of their arms. Outside on the surface of the green metal boxes was the image of the Zenk, etched into the side along with other designs.”

“Can I ask why you haven’t gotten rid of it?”

The Grand Lord turned his gaze to Fowl and almost appeared to frown.

“We are not a race that fights. My children are not designed for such a thing. No! We are designed to reflect the grace and beauty of life!”

Twirling on his stone block, Zenk rose up on a single polished shoe, spinning around like a dancer a few times.

“You… uh… dance?” their warrior asked.

“YES! Dancing is the greatest! That is why we must be free of this weather! To celebrate and dance whenever the mood strikes! In fact, if you want, we could put on a show right now!”

Max could feel Zenk’s heart racing. His eyes seemed to pulse with a fire to show whatever it was he believed they needed to see.

Each of the guards who were present looked at them all with the same expression.

I’m so going to owe everyone for this…

“Well… if you believe there is time… perhaps a small show–”

“PERFECT!” Zenk shouted, clapping his hands and leaping off the box. “Please, take a seat and give us just a moment. My children and I shall allow you to partake in the greatest display of life you will ever experience!”

A low mutter came from Fowl as the Grand Lord dashed across the room.

“This way, if you please,” the goblin creation said. “I shall direct you to your seats.”

“Someone is going to owe me big time,” their warrior muttered. “Big time.”

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The room erupted in applause as the now-filled hall was packed with the children of Zenk.

He was breathing hard. The Grand Lord was wearing a bright yellow tutu and was held aloft in the hands of one of the other dancers.

“What did I just witness?” Tanila whispered as she leaned over next to him. “Is he saying he is the sun?”

“Shh.. we’ll talk later.”

“Big time… I’m talking giant ogre-sized big time,” Fowl said as he rose like the rest.

They all joined in clapping for a good minute before finally being able to stop as Zenk made his way to them.

“Tell me, have you ever witnessed anything like this?!”

“No, no, I have not,” Max replied. “I doubt I ever shall either. You were right.”

A grin appeared, and the goblin bowed slightly.

“Well then, with that blessing granted, you all must set off on your quest! I shall peruse my vaults and see if there is anything else I might add to your reward!”

The same goblin creation that had led them to the only seats in the area beyond the stone throne motioned to them.

“This way, if you please.”

Max could feel every eye of those gathered upon them as they followed their guide.

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“Okay… I’m just going to say this right now,” Fowl began, growling as they passed the gates. “In all my life, I could imagine not wanting to see certain things, and that right there… it has now taken that number one position!”

Cordellia held up her hands in the air. “Preach it, my hairy little friend!”

“I mean–”

“I get it, Fowl… I do,” Max said, cutting off his companion. “Had I known–”

“WHAT?! You’ve got enough intelligence points to know that when a goblin asks you if you want to watch him dance, say no! If I asked, what would you say?”

Looking down at the dwarf standing before him, giving him the stink eye, Max sighed.

“I would have said no.”

“EXACTLY! Because we both know that’s not a good idea. And the second I start to put on some outfit like he did…”

Everyone shuddered at the same time, their mental image of the goblin in various skin-tight outfits showing way more than any of them desired.

“I’ll make it up to you… I promise. Even if we have to name our child Fowl or Fowletta.”

His friend began to smile and wagged a finger at him, before starting to laugh. “No… don’t do that. I can already see that Tanila is about to make you suffer for saying that.”

He turned to see the expression on her face and knew that his warrior friend was right again.

“Yeah… uh maybe I’ll find another way to make it up to you,” Max replied.

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Standing at the entrance to the world above the clouds, all five gazed at the same view.

“So what’s the plan?” Fowl asked. “Sneak inside? Draw it out?”

“I’m pretty sure those animals might be hard to fight at the same time as the gnome thing,” Cordellia said. “I doubt even my bow will pierce them.”

Max just nodded, listening to them as he considered a dozen ideas and plans, wishing Bob were there to bounce stuff off.

“You’re thinking. What’s on your mind?” Tanila asked.

Running his tongue over his teeth, Max couldn’t help but grimace slightly.

“Something seems off… I was thinking about it as I headed over here, and all I could think about was how weird this felt. Two different worlds in a single tower floor. Connected by a large plant. Both are different kinds of… robots or automatons. This one supposedly controls the weather below, and up here it's nothing but barren metal, a few clockwork or whatever animals, and a single giant. It just feels weird.”

“Like we’re tasked with the wrong objective?”

Max nodded at Tanila.

“How that Zenk guy seemed to know about us and what he expected was also frightening. It makes me wonder how each tower floor will be from now on. Are all of the beings or creatures on it going to know who or what we are?”

“So, what are you thinking we need to do?” Fowl asked again. “I mean… Chromie mentioned that we had never talked with that fire creature before killing it. You planning on walking up there, banging on the door, saying, ‘ *Hey there Mr. Robot. Zenk sent us up here to kill you, is that the right plan?* ’”

Shrugging, Max gave his friend a gentle shove.

“That’s not a bad idea, except I was going to have you do it instead.”

“Gods, no, I’m too handsome to die like that!”

Their healer and archer both laughed, but Max turned his attention back to the massive metal door.

“How about you four stay here. I’ll go and see what I can find. If things go wrong, you can all start moving down the beanstalk, and I can catch up. Cordellia is right. Fighting out here with those animals wouldn’t be a good idea either.”

“You sure?”

He nodded at their mage and winked at her.

“I’ll be fine. Trust me.”

A few groans came from all of them at those words.

“So, just remember if things go sideways, it was his words and not mine,” Fowl informed Batrire.

Shooing them away, Max waited until they were on the first step toward the world below.

I feel like an idiot talking to myself… especially since you never answer.

Taking a deep breath, Max let it out and flew into the air, moving toward the door.

As he moved, the animals stopped their grazing and watched him. A loud moo came from the cow as he passed overhead and drew near to the building.

The closer he got to it, the larger it became, and the true realization of what must live inside started to set in.

If we have to fight, this would be the largest boss we’ve faced. Who in their right mind would just walk up and attempt that?

In his head, he went through all the potential items he had that might help against something this large and considered possible options.

When he was about a hundred yards away from the door it swung open, and the same gnome creation stepped out, staff in hand and blue eyes fixed upon him.

“It appears someone has come to die,” it proclaimed, stopping in the doorway.

Stopping his approach, Max held up both hands, hovering midair at about eye level.

“Wait! I just want to talk!”

A rust-colored eyebrow raised over one eye, and the gnome leveled its staff at Max.

“You speak the words of my kind… I’ll give you a moment to talk. Convince me your death isn’t required and quickly.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]13/485(1) Chapter 485 - Tower Choices

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-19 16:00 [2025-06-18 16:01] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2368806/chapter-485-tower-choices;13/485(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 12:19],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 12:19],[Wayback_first2025-06-23 12:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-23 12:19],[this.word2025-06-24 13:01],[publish2025-06-19 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-19 16:00])Chapter 485 - Tower Choices - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 485 - Tower Choices

“I’m not looking to fight,” Max replied. “I’ve fought and killed many things before, but I prefer not to end lives if I don’t have to. Instead, I’m trying to figure out why that goblin, Zenk, wants us to try to kill you.”

The giant gnome bent over slightly, lowered its staff, and spit. A green glob of liquid landed on the metal, causing it to bubble and pop.

“That liar!” it roared. “He is the one who should be punished and die! He stole my crystal, and now what I am commanded to do doesn’t work right! Do you know how many lives have ended because of his actions?!”

Max frowned, seeing the gnome's metal face contort and change in several different ways. At first, it appeared angry, as both eyebrows narrowed and its lips curled together. Then, its expression softened, looking hurt at the last words it had spoken.

“What crystal? Why do you have to cause problems?”

Banging the bottom of its metal staff against the floor, the gnome started to have smoke escape from both its ears.

“The great crafter made me and gave me a job. A single task. Keep the weather and ensure the valley below flourishes. For so long, I did that and those below flourished. Then one day that wretched gnome came and stole my crystal, which is the source of much power! Now he enslaves those below as his own, and I cannot imagine how he mistreats them! You are not the first to have been sent here to try and take my life.”

“I’m guessing they all failed?” Max asked.

The tendrils of smoke faded and the gnome shook its head slowly.

“Some defeated me. Yet my death will never be permanent. As long as the crystal remains, I too shall remain. We are bonded. Not being together causes horrible things to occur.”

Max couldn’t help but frown, sensing that there was some truth to what he was being told.

“This crystal. How large is it and where would I find it?”

Both blue eyes grew, and the gnome took a step closer.

“You would retrieve my crystal?”

“If I can, I will.”

“And will you slay that goblin?!”

Frowning, Max shook his head from side to side.

“I’d prefer not to, only because at this moment I am taking your word against his. If I am forced to fight, and he dies, that is his choice. My biggest fear is those below who call him father. They–”

“Are enslaved, bound by the crystal’s power!”

Max waited until the giant gnome settled down and then nodded.

“I can see how that might be the case. Tell me what the gem does to them. What exactly is it?”

A mechanical grunt came as the giant leaned against his oversized staff.

“A gift from the creator. The power in it is beyond what most can imagine. It provides life or can bring death. Order and chaos. When it is not where it belongs the world below and up here suffer greatly.”

His mind began to race, trying to imagine something so powerful, how it was designed, and what its purpose was.

“So… how then did it get stolen? I mean… why would Zenk keep it?”

“Did you not listen? I told you the kind of power it possesses!”

The giant’s voice boomed as it spoke, the force of it washing over his body.

“I heard you… I just…” Max paused and waved off the thought he had. “What will happen if I can retrieve it and return it here?”

“Balance and order will be restored.”

The simple back and forth was getting on his nerves, and Max wanted more answers, knowing each floor couldn’t be simple anymore.

“I mean to those below. What will happen to the ones Zenk calls his children? When we were down there we saw actual children and others of different… ages. I would prefer not to harm any of them. My real concern is what happens to them upon its return, and what will prevent Zenk from retaking it?”

The giant stood there, blue eyes radiating with light as it stared at him.

“Do you assume I would allow myself to be stolen from again?”

A hint of anger or something was in its tone.

“No, but I assume you didn’t ‘allow’ it to be stolen the first time. I’m also not one for needless games. Will you swear that life for everyone above and below will be better if the crystal is returned?”

“That logic is impossible to promise. While I would say yes, Zenk will say no. All I can say is that the creator gave me the crystal, and it is my duty to carry out my task. Only when I wield it will the weather return to normal and life as it should be in the valley.”

Rising to its full height, the giant banged its staff again.

“Either do what I ask or try to slay me. Until you have decided which path to take, begone. The longer I stand here, the sooner I must do what I was created for, and I do not wish to damage the valley again so soon.”

It turned, leaving him hovering in midair. It stepped into its home's shadows and slammed the metal door behind it.

Well, that wasn’t pleasant.

Max flew quickly to where his friends were and saw the expressions on each of their faces.

“So… what’s the plan?” Fowl asked for what seemed like the hundredth time.

“I’m not sure. Something is off, and it feels like whatever we choose will have a fallout of some kind. The giant wants us to retrieve some crystal and says the creator gave it to him to ensure the valley is cared for. Zenk supposedly uses it because its power allows him to turn the beings below into followers. Somehow, it was stolen, but the giant wasn’t in the mood to talk.”

“Typical gnome,” Batrire muttered.

“So, do you think we should go and talk to Zenk?” Tanila asked. “Hear his side of the story?”

Rubbing his head, Max shrugged.

“I’m not sure we’d get the full truth from him either.”

“But we can’t leave or pass this tower floor until we do one of those? Right?” Cordellia asked.

Max cocked his head at their archer and then smiled.

“Maybe… or maybe we can find a third option.”

“A third option?”

Chuckling, he moved closer to Cordellia, put his hand on her shoulder, and gave her a playful shove.

“I think you helped me see another path.”

“Which is what?” Fowl asked.

“Perhaps we take the crystal and see what both sides do after we have it.”

***

Hovering far above the city, Max stared down at the town, watching as the darkness of night caused the view below to twinkle like stars.

“Do you think they sleep? I mean, they’re automatons,” Fowl said as he peered out of the dimensional space.

“I haven’t got a clue, but they act like normal beings. Regardless, I would expect fewer of them on the street, and since we know where Zenk’s place is, we need to get inside and try to scout around.”

“You mean, you’re going to scout around while we hide in here?” Cordellia said.

“Potato, patato,” Max replied. “Now then, unless you want to be strapped to my back for this next part, back up while I shut the door.”

Once they were all safe, he dropped like a rock, not worried about the speed for now as he plunged toward the city.

Bob… wherever you are, I hope you’re doing okay. I miss these moments of conversation.

Lost in his thoughts, Max activated stealth as he drew near, using his Wind Mastery to slow his descent and make his way toward a window he saw open in Zenk’s place.

Inside, darkness was everywhere, but his Sonar made it easy for him to see and detect the pair of guards standing like statues less than ten yards away in the hallway he entered.

Neither of them seemed to detect his presence, and without a sound, Max made his way down the hallway and used Everett's noise-canceling item to open and close the door.

The stone room was nothing special; there were no decorations or chairs, and it was simply an area again with no lights and four guards, one each stationed in a corner.

It's like they're sleeping, but they aren't.

His mind started to consider what he had seen with Sonar: all the rooms were lifeless, with no art or decorations, just like the one Zenk had met them in.

A cold shiver ran up his spine as Max considered what he saw and the lack of any display of *life* in this building.

Without waiting, knowing that his stealth would end soon, he found another doorway, trying to use his mental image of the building and the place he had entered to find a place to reset.

Slipping into another hallway through a door, he found it empty, only twenty feet long and with a single door on the opposite end.

Letting stealth drop, he took a few deep breaths and tried to still his mind.

If you were here, I'm 100% certain this would have gone faster.

Slowly, he reached out, trying to sense any kind of magical power within the area around him.

The cold stone was like a shield; his sonar told him nothing.

With great care, he activated his Stone Mastery and created small holes in the hallway, the tiniest of openings, allowing his ability to reach more through both walls and the floor.

The tiniest trace of magic was from below, and Max began to widen the hole, letting his sonar reveal more of the room beneath him.

No sound came, and the small area of detection he had came back with nothing but a floor, unable to sense a wall or anything else.

Activating stealth and trusting his ability, Max descended below.

[Demonic Teleportation]

Immediately, the room exploded in his mind, his Sonar revealing stone counters, tables, and an assortment of what had to be body parts of the automatons that moved around town.

He could sense no movement and bending down a slight layer of dust told him this place wasn't used often.

Seeing a door on opposite ends of the room, Max picked the one that would take him toward the center of the building.

Like before, he created a hole in the wall, scanning the next room, trying to sense anything he could.

Seconds passed, and Max didn't detect or hear anything other than an increased sensation of magical power.

Without waiting any longer, he opened the door, finding that the room was dark again.

No lights of any kind were activated, yet he sensed a few of them scattered around.

It was a large shop with a dozen stone tables, each with more automatons of different sizes and shapes, all unmoving and in various stages of completion.

Metal wires ran from a section in the center of the room to each table, the soft, steady pulse of power coming through them.

Only a single door was in the room, and Max was sure he had found the space where Zenk must be either repairing or creating new creations.

So... either these are his children or something else.... But that means the giant lied? Or...

Frustrated by all the questions running through his mind, Max moved to where the cables disappeared into a wide tube in the floor. The sensation of what he knew had to be the crystal was now easily detectable.

Nothing in the room appeared to be a place he could open to descend below, so he decided to make his own entrance, moving stones into his storage.

As the first one came free, a yellow light appeared from below, and Max sensed the sound of movement.

“Father?”

His heart missed a beat as a child-sized automaton sat up, still missing a leg, and looked at where he was stealthed.

Goblin shite...

Links

//[2025-06-24 13:01]

[None]

[F7]14/486(1) Chapter 486 - Choices Made

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2371451/chapter-486-choices-made;
[F7]14/486(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 12:19],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 12:19],[Wayback_first2025-06-23 12:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-23 12:19],[this.word2025-06-24 13:10],[publish2025-06-20 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-20 16:00])Chapter 486 - Choices Made - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 486 - Choices Made

Without making a sound, Max watched as the automaton child stared at where the light was streaming up from the hole in the floor he had made.

A single green eye focused and unfocused, the other socket empty and black.

Its head moved from side to side, glancing around the room. As its head turned, the cable connecting to its back slid along the stone table.

“Father?”

Peering through the hole he had made, Max activated Demonic Teleportation and replaced the stone he had moved, cutting off the light that was spilling into the room above.

With a few seconds of no one around, he marveled at the device before him.

Every one of his skills related to engineering or crafting with these things was going off.

A four-foot-tall pedestal was before him with a glowing yellow crystal the size of his head.

Half a dozen runes that his Omnilingualism skill could read pulsed on the outside surface. Another twenty-plus, his mind couldn’t comprehend, but based on what he saw, he imagined that this thing was the most potent source of power he had ever encountered.

The stone floor was covered with neatly bound cables that ran upward into the ceiling, and the floor had its own runic patterns set out in a circle.

What the heck is this thing?

Max carefully moved around the metal stand, inspecting the different buttons, levers, and connectors that all had a purpose. Everywhere were things his skill told him that had a function for channeling the power being released from it.

To his left was a stone door, runes carved in it, and a sensation of a trap or something nasty was being set upon it.

Opening his dimensional space, Max stepped inside and stood before his party. He could see them all looking at the crystal behind him.

“I’m assuming that's it?” Cordellia asked. “What are you going to do with it?”

Frowning, Max pointed at the stand it was resting on.

“If I’m right, this crystal gives off too much power to simply be here and do nothing with it. Based on what my skills tell me, I’ll have to disconnect it from the tiny clamps I see at the base of it and then transfer it in here. I’m pretty sure it won’t fit into my normal storage.”

“Why’s that?” Fowl asked.

“Too much power. Like… far more than any of the crystals we’ve picked up in the tower. Part of me thinks this tower floor is designed so that you can’t simply pick this thing up, store it, and vanish.”

“You mean either way you’re going to fight someone or something in order to pass this floor?” Batrire asked him.

'Max nodded at their healer.

“But if we take this,” Tanila said as she tapped her lip, “can we get out of here? Is there a portal anywhere nearby that we can even take?”

“Gods, imagine if there wasn’t a portal unless you either kill that giant or turn in the crystal,” Fowl muttered. “But then again, haven’t most of these floors had a portal unless it had a boss?”

With no real answer, Max shrugged and turned back to face the object everything seemed centered around.

“I really don’t want to give it away if we can help it because I think this is something I’ll need to help craft the dragon tooth.”

“Seriously?” Tanila gasped. “You can tell?”
He nodded at their mage.

“I’m planning on ripping the whole thing off the floor if I can,” Max said. “There are a few things I believe I can do to help infuse magic and energy into weapons with this. Still, I won’t know until I try and most likely that will need to be somewhere safely away from everyone else. The problem we’re facing now is that once I take this, I do not doubt that Zenk will sense it, and this entire city will become chaotic.”

“So we’ll be fighting?” Fowl asked.

“Most likely. The question is who or what,” Max replied. “We’ll need to prepare for whatever might come the moment I take this, but the real problem is we don’t know how strong anything on this world is. So we might be facing an entire town of elite automatons.”

They stood there momentarily, each glancing around, and Max could tell they were considering their options.

“If we had to fight one, I’m all for killing Zenk,” Fowl stated. “Something about a goblin prancing around like that makes me think they must be evil.”

Chuckles came from everyone, and Max pointed at the crystal.

“I’ll try to disconnect it and bring everything I can here. You all just wait and see what happens. Worst case, it blows up, and I’ll live.”

Tanila frowned at Max. “Not a good way to use a skill that might be needed in the coming days. I understand there aren’t many options, but…”

Her voice trailed off as Max held up a hand.

“Without Bob here to help, all I can do is be smart. That means not risking anyone else,” he replied. “But once that’s done, we’ll go out as a team. Perhaps we can find a portal inside here. If not, maybe we can–”

He stopped talking, and an escape gem appeared in his hand.

“You’re not seriously thinking that would work?” Cordellia asked.

Nodding, he held it up before all of them.

“What if all we need to do is get out of this floor with the crystal? Would that count as a win?”

“Technically,” Tanila said as she held up a finger, “if you defeated the boss on a tower floor and used the gem to escape instead of the portal, you would still have the win counted. The main thing is defeating the boss. You’re willing to bet one of those to find out?”

“As much as I hate to gamble with one, I think we’re better off trying now. If it fails and we don’t defeat the floor, we can always re-enter when we’re allowed to and go up to the giant, returning the crystal to him and counting that as a win.”

“Why are you afraid of fighting? Because of the children?” Fowl asked.

“Partially for that reason, the other is I think the tower is still judging us. We’ve broken the way one is supposed to defeat a tower floor multiple other times. Why not try that again?”

Max stored the gem and moved outside his dimensional space when no one else voiced an opinion.

Bob, how I wish you were here.

***
As Max undid the last bolts, a few drops of sweat were wiped away from his forehead. He was glad to have disconnected the device and not had anything explode.

Storing the removed parts, he carefully lifted the yellow crystal from its resting place.

Instantly, his eyes slammed shu,t and his body felt like it was being stung by millions of bees.

Every fiber of his body was flooded with a power that flowed through his gauntlets and into him.

“Max?!”

Tanila’s cry seemed distant, but he ignored her, knowing his face had a pained expression.

Each step to where the dimensional space was felt like an eternity and after managing to endure the four strides to step inside, the power of the crystal immediately stopped.

“Goblin shite, that was…” he paused taking a deep breath. “Impossible to describe.”

“It looked painful,” their warrior stated. “You okay?”

Nodding, he set it down on the purple stone off to the side.

“Yeah… Now, I’ll need to get the other part and –”

Loud noises came from outside the dimensional space, and Max let a curse out, quickly moving to where the pedestal he had taken apart was still waiting.

A siren of some sort was playing and with the yellow light of the crystal gone, two green stones set in the wall cast an eerie glow over the room.

Grimacing at how quickly things had been noticed, he pulled out his weapon, turned it into an axe and chopped through the strands of tubes that ran into the room above.

After storing it, Max tried to lift it, but it was set inside the floor and didn’t budge.

Using his Stone Mastery, he began to lift the grey stones it was attached to, using a combination of wind magic to help him pull as he did.

“Can we–”

He shook his head, cutting off their ranger. Sensing the piece finally starting to rise, Max let go of the metal he had been pulling upward on, moving to the side by the stone and creating a spot to grab onto.

A loud snap rang out, and the section of flooring and pillar almost got tossed into the ceiling, his skill helping him to keep it in place.

In the hole he had created were four eight-inch wide pylons that had been connected and kept anchored.

“Let me store this, and you all hop out. We need to go!”

They shifted to the side as Max quickly entered the dimensional space, setting it down and backing out.

With it closed and the entire party in the room with him, he pulled out the gem and crushed it in his hand.

A soft breeze and the smell of a city told Max they were standing on the platform near the tower.

“That was… not what I had expected,” Batrire stated. “Then again, I wasn’t sure what would happen when one of those was used.”

“It’s just like a portal,” Cordellia said. “Except, you can use it anywhere on a tower floor.”

They all glanced at the guards watching them stand around, none drawing close, as the stories of Max had left no doubt that they were all too weak to stop him if they tried.

“I guess we’ll see if it worked,” he said, moving to the tower portal.

He said a quick prayer, touched it, and saw the notification pop up.

***

[Select Floor to Enter]

[Tower Floor 72]

***

“Yes!” he exclaimed, doing a small fist pump and turning toward his friends.

“Seriously?!”

Nodding at Tanila, he held out a hand and high-fived his dwarven friend.

“Well… that’s good to know,” Cordellia said. “I guess we can tell Everett about that.”

“Maybe. Who knows if the tower will let us? I’m not sure about the rest of you for now, but I think we should take a day off and return tomorrow.”

“Sounds like a plan,” Fowl said. “I, for one, can use a drink or two.”

“Bah, you need a drink like a fish in the ocean,” Batrire replied.

“Which means it provides the life I need to live?”

As the two dwarves walked off, chuckling, Max watched Cordellia hesitate.

“Hey, can we chat?”

She glanced at him and looked at Tanila, who shrugged.

“Sure…. Like here or…”

“Let’s get a drink, just the three of us. I know a place nearby that has that elven wine you two like,” Max told their archer. “Besides, unless you want to get into a drinking contest with Fowl, we’ll need to go somewhere besides the tavern I know he’s headed to.”

Cordellia nodded and moved to walk beside Tanila.

“This isn’t one of those talks where I’m going to get in trouble or something?”

Laughing, Max shook his head.

“No,” he replied. “Just a few things I wanted to discuss while it’s just the three of us.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]15/487(1) Chapter 487 - Cordellia [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2374121/chapter-487-cordellia; [F7]15/487(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 12:19],[word.Waybak], [Wayback_first2025-06-23 12:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-23 12:19], [this.word2025-06-24 13:26],[publish2025-06-21 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-21 16:00])Chapter 487 - Cordellia - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2]*/

Paying rent sucks. Properties are overpriced. But could you fix that with magic?

Become the strongest, defeat powerful enemies, save the world—those are the typical things people who get summoned to another world do. Clayton Stratton won’t have any of that, though. He’d rather stay in the comforts of his home and enjoy a cup of tea over a book. However, that doesn’t mean he’ll ignore the world’s problems. He’ll just leave it to others instead.

Unfortunately for Clay, he came into an unfriendly world, broke. With monsters overflowing from dungeons limiting humanity’s living space to the few walled cities they have, a regular job won’t be enough to pay the bills. From what he has read about dungeons, the living conditions will only get worse the more time passes. In order to build himself a cozy home and guide others with his knowledge of the dungeons, he’ll have to do utilize the miraculous power of magic to tackle both goals.

Construction work isn’t easy. Neither is getting others to listen to his word without coming off as a crazy doomer. Thankfully, his two goals may not be as different as he thinks.

What to expect?

- LitRPG with lots of leveling up

- An Earth Mage with an unorthodox build (Not just shooting big spells)

- Kingdom building? More like building buildings.

- Dungeon delving

- Recreating modern comforts with magic (Who wants to live somewhere without proper plumbing?)

- Probably a shovel

Release Schedule

On release, 5x a week for the first four weeks (Extra chapters for hitting milestones)

Then tentatively 4x a week (Mon-Thu)

Construction Mage[L3]

Chapter 487 – Cordellia

The soft glow of the inn did almost nothing to chase away the shadows and nightmares in Cordellia’s mind. Keeping track of how many days it had been since Tanila and Max had rescued her from that hell made it worse.

The worn wooden table provided a barrier between her and them, her fingers wrapped around a cup of expensive elven wine that she had barely touched. Elsewhere in the room, life was taking place, and laughter and the sounds of others living rang out. Each time the clatter of a dropped mug or someone yelled too loudly caused a memory of her past to rise up, resulting in Cordellia flinching.

Max sat there, watching her carefully, his rough hands resting on the table, steady as always.

“You barely sleep,” he said in a low voice. “You flinch when someone raises their voice, so don’t pretend you’re okay.”

Cordellia swallowed hard. “I’m not pretending.”

She had to fight not to grimace as she spoke, those words almost leaving a sour taste in her mouth.

Gold eyes searched her as Tanila leaned forward. “You know I can sense something is wrong. What is it?”

Her mind raced, trying to decide if she wanted to lie or offer some other answer that might get her out of this conversation. Yet her chest was heavy, and the pain of it all was impossible to bear. Knowing these two loved her and wanted to help gave her the strength to push on.

Taking a deep breath, she slowly let it out.

“In the tower, everything makes sense. We have rules, follow our normal, stupid routines, and everyone has expectations of what each of us will do. I have a role. I know my role. In there… I feel like I can fight… I can survive. Out here…” Unable to help it, she saw Max’s eyes look at her fingers, the dent they had just made as she squeezed them too hard. “Everything is… unpredictable. Someone yelling or a touch I don't expect and… it’s like I’m back there… trapped.”

She watched Max’s jaw tense and knew he had forced it to relax.

“That’s normal… I mean not what you went through, but no one returns from something like that unchanged… I didn’t.”

His voice had shifted, and his eyes stared into his cup.

Cordellia knew he was being open and honest. He too knew the pain of being taken away.

“I… I was angry and upset. Part of me was filled with malice, and there were things I regret now… what I did to Terrance back in Alundra… that was wrong. All I knew was getting revenge, finding answers, and not caring how I hurt others. Thankfully, you all reminded me there were other ways to live and to let go of the pain of the past.”

He tapped his chest slowly a few times and smiled at her.

“In here, there is pain. It will never go away, but as time has passed, it has decreased. There isn’t a day that doesn’t go by that the risk of thinking about it isn’t there, but I try to focus on the good… on you and the rest of the team. All I’m saying is I know what you’ve been through to a degree. You’re not alone, and I… we wanted to remind you that we love you and are here for you.”

A laugh escaped her lips, and Cordellia winced after it had come out.

Love… that’s what got me into this mess… well not love… but the desire for it.

“I should be stronger than this, though. I’ve fought with you all in the tower against impossible odds. I just… don’t know how to fight… this.” She tapped her temple, frustration rising as she spoke. “I don’t know how to make the nightmares stop.”

Tanila reached across the table and took her hand from her cup, holding it firmly between hers.

“Strength isn’t about never breaking. You’ve watched Max, Batrire, Fowl, and even me, the *special* one, break. Real strength is letting others help put the pieces back together.”

Gods, I want to believe that.

Max leaned forward and put one of his hands on top of theirs.

“You don’t have to figure this out alone. We’re here. When the nightmares come, you can come wake up either of us. When something scares you or startles you, find either of us and take our hand. Let us be your walls when the world feels too… open.”

Her eyes blinked on their own, and she realized immediately that tears were running down her cheeks.

Blinking away the stinging sensation, she felt something in her chest she hadn’t felt in so long.

Hope.

“Okay… I’ll try.”

Tanila squeezed her hand again and smiled. “That’s all we’re asking for now.”

Her heart raced. The beat of it was different from the times she had been scared in the tower, knowing death might come from a creature far stronger than her.

It was different than how it had been when she was trapped and tortured, wishing it would give out and end the pain of what she was enduring.

For the first time in days, Cordellia felt something shift.

The ghosts and nightmares were still there. They just weren’t as loud as they had been.

She placed her other hand on Max’s and squeezed both of theirs.

I’m not alone…

Links

//[2025-06-24 13:26]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/construction-mage-building-a-home-in-another-world-aabalmetkbc.jpg?time=1749466797

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/121068/construction-mage-building-a-home-in-another-world

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/121068/construction-mage-building-a-home-in-another-world

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[F7]16/488(1) Chapter 488 - An Offer Given

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2376491/chapter-488-an-offer-given;
[F7]16/488(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-06-23 17:02,=1 2025-06-23 12:19],
[word.Waybak=2 2025-06-23 17:02],[Wayback_first2025-06-23 12:19],
[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-23 12:19],[this.word2025-06-24 13:45],
[publish2025-06-22 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-22 16:00])Chapter 488 - An Offer Given - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 488 - An Offer Given

Everett’s frown remained as he watched Max lean the pedestal he had taken from the last tower floor against the wall.

“You… cheated and stole?” Tom asked.

“Not technically,” Max replied as he turned and closed the dimensional space.

Tom still can't get over the fact that I have this...

Knowing the trainer always got wide-eyed after he saw it, even after being told about it and experiencing it a few times, Max couldn’t help but grin at the man's reaction.

“I can’t say more because it won’t let us but know that…” his throat guided him on what he could and couldn’t say, failing to work when he went down the wrong path. “You’ll have to figure out how to handle each floor yourself.”

“So that item inside your storage… how strong is it?” Everett asked.

Motioning to a stone crafting table, Max began laying out supplies on it.

The dragon's tooth, Ockrim’s token, fire-forged bars, power cores and other crafting materials were neatly organized on the table.

“What is that one?” Tom asked, pointing to a new drop from the previous ten floors.

“A magical conducting metal,” Max replied. “Now then, forget all that and let me explain.”

“Forget all that,” the trainer muttered. “A kingdom worth of materials…”

Patting the tooth that Wekime had given him, Max smiled.

“I’m getting close. You both know how long I’ve been waiting to try and craft this, and I think I'll be ready to start with one or two more items.”

“But you’re not sure what items,” Everett said as he bent over and inspected the new things Max had put on the table.

“Correct.”

He pulled out a piece of paper and unrolled it, earning a whistle from both men as they looked at it.

“What is that?” Tom asked. “I… I can sense something magical about it.”

“I wish it were a gift, but I paid a hefty price for it,” he replied. “A dwarf from another world let me buy it off her, but it will help with the forging of the weapon I plan on making from this thing.”

“A… sword? No, a spear?”

Max smiled at Everett, who was looking over the design, shaking his head.

“Part of me isn’t sure if I can create something like what I’m using right now. If it’s not able to morph, I’d rather be prepared and that is where these bands come in.”

He tapped on the sketch where two fire-forged bands were around the tooth.

“You can take it apart? Why would you do that?” Tom asked.

“Sometimes you need a little extra reach, and sometimes you need to be able to be in close. This will give me the best of both worlds,” he informed them. “And with the ability to swap out almost instantly, it’s not that big of a deal in some ways. Or at least I hope it won’t be.”

Grunting, Tom stood up and pointed at the door.

“You two have fun here. My head is about to explode, and I must check in on Fowl and Batrire. Both of them were excited about getting to upgrade their skills.”

“It’s about time they go to. With all those–”

“I know, I know, but remember, we can’t just feed tons of crystals at once. Now that I know you’re here and not going anywhere, we can continue to build up a surplus and limit who has access. Besides, you and I both know they’re excited to get a skill upgraded to legendary.”

Max nodded and rolled up the paper.

“Tell them I said not to be late tomorrow morning. We got an early day.”

Tom waved as he left the crafting room and shut the door.

Everett stood there, watching him as he put the materials back into storage.

“You're going to leave that thing in the corner?”

Max nodded, flashing the best smile he had.

“I can put it in my dimensional space, but I doubt you have anyone coming in here who will try and take or move that. Besides, isn’t this room off-limits to almost everyone but my team?”

“It is… still, I hate to see the place junked up like this,” Everett replied. “It’s bad enough I had to pay for a new dimensional vault to help store all the other stuff you have given us.”

“Shame we don’t have an armor smith who can do the level we want for those scales.”

“That is why I reached out to Dagon. He says he is willing to trade services for materials. Just like you told me he would.”

“Dwarves and dragons… they’ll sell their beard—almost—for a few scales,” Max replied. “For now, we’ll focus on the tower. Tell Dexic to be ready the next time I’m back. I’ll help her with that party you have.”

Everett’s face scrunched up before returning to its normal, relaxed look. “I can’t believe you’ll power-level a group for us. I mean, I am grateful, but still… the fact that you’re going to take a day or two off means more than you know.”

Leaning against the stone table, Max crossed his arms and locked eyes with his Faction leader. “I’ll be honest that even though most consider it bad form, you and I both know that they will be stronger because of the loot and experience they get. You’ll also have to ensure they do understand I expect them to stay at the floor's entrance. Part of this is selfish as you know.”

“Selfish… son, part of me doesn’t care if you took all the gems for yourself and the team,” Everett replied with a chuckle. “You realize that them getting to kill the 45th and 49th-floor boss will be a game changer. They can go back and farm them with Dexic. Besides, she says you’ve got a promise to keep with her?”

Clearing his throat, Max grinned.

“I might have promised to help her on the tower floors above 50. I can’t take her to the 60th but I’m fairly certain I can get her through the 59th in no time.”

The older man shook his head slowly.

“You really are different, Max. I’ve said it many times, but…” Everett held out his hand and waited.

Without waiting, he shook hands, smiling as Everett continued.

“We owe you more than I can ever repay. Thank you again, Max.”

“Don’t worry about it. Just keep feeding those crystals to the Faction shard. Our team is going to use the skill points we have been saving. Perks of being level 75 and all.”

“And not even on the seventy-fifth floor,” Everett muttered. “Keep this up and I’m certain–”

Max watched as his Faction leader's eyes started to widen.

“Yes?”

“Son… the stat milestone… surely…”

“Are you asking me how big mine is? I thought that was against the rules.”

Waving a hand, Everett winced.

“Forgive me, Max. I… for a moment–”

“In all five. I have them in all five stats.”

***

Max couldn’t help but grin as Tanila frowned.

“You didn’t really do that did you? I mean… I can tell that you did by that stupid smile on your face, but why tell him about all five?”

He couldn’t help but smile, feeling the muscles in his cheeks holding that position for so long.

“Because Everett needs to know the bonuses a human gets for reaching 250 in each stat,” Max replied. “Also I wasn’t expecting him to pass out. Tom… sure, but Everet?”

Rolling her eyes, Tanila drummed her finger on the book's cover resting on her lap.

He saw her wince slightly and sensed the movement in her belly.

“They’re kicking?”

Nodding, she used her other hand to rub the growing bump slowly. “Every day now and often multiple times per day. Sometimes… I think they can sense you. When you come into the room and talk after not being there, they immediately shift and turn. Makes me almost jealous that they don’t do that for me.”

“What? Kick whenever you enter a room?”

He caught the book she threw at him, glancing at the spine before storing it.

“You should really get some rest,” Max said as he patted the spot on the bed next to him. “Tomorrow’s another day in the tower, and I don’t need you complaining like Fowl.”

Tanila summoned another book and threw it at him, groaning as he caught it just as easily as the first.

“Sometimes you don’t act like someone with more intelligence than any man recorded in all of history,” she stated as she stood.

“That’s because I’m smart enough to hide how vastly different I am from the rest. Besides, I’m hoping tomorrow is a fight where Fowl and Batrire can show off their new legendary skills.”

Climbing into the bed, she snuggled up against him, and he felt her smile as he stroked her golden hair.

“Thank you, by the way,” Tanila whispered.

“For what?”

“For what you did with Cordellia… opening up like that to her. I know it meant a lot.”

Squeezing her a little tighter, Max sighed. “She’s family, and I don’t want her to forget that. We’ve both tried to conquer our demons and nightmares alone, and we both know how impossible that was. Even worse, what she endured… was beyond our worst nightmares.”

Minutes passed as they lay there, Tanila’s breathing slowing down, and Max reached out, trying to pull on the thread he knew was connected to Bob, nothing seeming to respond no matter what he did.

A knock on the door made him open his eyes, and Tanila sat up.

“Come in,” he said.

Slowly, the door opened, and Cordellia stood in the doorway, her cheeks wet, and brown hair scattered everywhere as she wore a robe.

“I…”

“Come in and get right here,” Tanila said immediately, patting the part of the bed next to her.

Max saw hope in her features, and a bit of fear vanished as her wet eyes focused on the spot Tanila had just patted. Without waiting, their archer moved to Tanila's side and stood there momentarily.

“Just get in, you’re fine.”

As soon as their mage had spoken, Cordellia lifted the light cover and slid in next to Tanila who had sat up against the headboard.

“Thank you,” she whispered, laying her head against Tanila’s chest.

“We didn’t say what we said just to talk,” Max whispered as he reached over and slowly rubbed Cordellia’s head a few times. “If you need us, we’re here.”

Sniffing again, their ranger nodded and closed her eyes, her breathing becoming more regular as she lay there.

Tanila looked at him and mouthed the words *thank you* , and he just smiled.

In bed with two elven women… if only…

His thought sent a sharp pain through his chest as his wandering mind thought of Caleb. That thought had been a running joke between him and his childhood friend. Caleb had always talked about how he would experience such a thing one day.

Inside him a fountain of lava began to boil, and it took Max a few seconds to force it away.

Glancing down at the two women next to him, he couldn’t help but frown, knowing there was something here that most would never understand and that his friend of so long was missing out on this. Even worse… perhaps Stacy and Callie were missing out on this.

Bob... Forgive me for whatever happened to you. I... I know you're in whatever position you are because of what I asked you to do for Rakonath...

Glancing at the open door, Max slowly and carefully used his Wind Mastery to shut it, glad to see that neither woman stirred as he did so.

Links

//[2025-06-24 13:45]

[None]

[F7]17/489(1) Chapter 489 - Floor 72 [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2379088/chapter-489-floor-72; [F7]17/489(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 16:01],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-23 16:01],[Wayback_first2025-06-23 16:02],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-23 16:00],[this.word2025-06-24 13:54],[publish2025-06-23 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-06-23 16:00])Chapter 489 - Floor 72 - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Saved for Randombluecat

Chapter 489 - Floor 72

"It's too early," Stacy moaned as she shuffled into the main room of her place. "What do you want?"

"I'm about to head into the tower but realized something last night... a hard lesson that comes only through pain and I realized I needed to ask you something," he replied.

Frowning, his sister moved to the couch where he pointed and plopped down.

"Did Tom say something? I mean, he–"

Shaking his head, Max put a hand on her knee and squeezed.

"No. This is about you, Callie, and... Caleb."

"What about him?" she asked, her tone turning gruff and a frown appearing.

"I know what I said when I first found out about me killing him or worse... but..." he glanced around the room and back at his sister, seeing her waiting on him to finish.

“If you think you might want him to be part of Callie’s life or even have a chance of being there for her or you, just let Tom know. He’ll send someone to find him.”

The sound of a clock ticking in the room was his only reply for a few moments, and Stacy’s frown never vanished as she leaned back, surviving how she bit her lip.

“You… want me to let him back into our lives? After he did what he did?”

Shaking his head, Max sighed.

“He was stupid… and I won’t say it was because he was young or anything else. Tell me, did you make the best decisions after what happened to me?”

Her frown grew and then slowly vanished as she shook her head.

“No… none of us did. I… I might have acted a fool trying to keep him close when he was supposed to leave,” she whispered, eyes darting to her fidgeting hands. “I had no one. With you gone, mom being… how she was and dad trying to hide from all the townspeople that treated us so differently, he was all I had.”

Stacy took a deep breath and looked at him. He could see the angst on her face, the muscles that tightened repeatedly.

“I’m not saying you have to decide today, sis. Just… after what I’ve been through and what Cordellia went through… having family and those you care about around is important. Last night… for whatever reason, it hit me. Trust me, it took me a bit to get past my anger and see things from Callie’s possible side and yours. Whatever you decide, I’ll support.”

Once again, she took a deep breath and blew it out her lips, letting them make a raspberry as she did.

“You’re a bastard, you know that?” Stacy asked with a grin.

“Which makes you one as well, right?”

Chuckling, she shrugged. “I guess this means you’re about to head into the tower if you dropped something like that on me. Always something heavy and deep, and then *poo,1* you disappear.”

Activating his Stealth skill, Max couldn’t help but laugh as she did the same.

“I love you,” he said as he tapped her, breaking their stealth.

“Love you too. Be safe.”

***

“HOLY OCKRIM’S BEARD!”

Fowl’s shout caused everyone to turn and see what had caused their dwarven warrior to utter such a statement after he bashed in the head of a seven-foot-tall kobold with his hammer.

“What?!” Batrire exclaimed as everyone rushed to where he stood, carefully holding his weapon in both hands.

Max studied it and immediately knew it was different. The handle was slightly longer, and dark runes appeared along its head. It, too, had grown an inch wider and two inches longer.

“My weapon… it… evolved,” Fowl said slowly.

“Really?!” exclaimed Cordellia.

Everyone turned and started to laugh as she covered one hand with one mouth and held up a finger on the other.

“That was… a bit higher than I can recall in a while,” Tanila teased.

“Bah, just tell us what it has become,” their ranger said, obvious to all that she had attempted to lower her pitch.

“Uh… so… yeah it now gives 200 to Strength and Constitution–”

“Holy elf tits!” Batrire exclaimed.

A grunt came from their warrior, who shook his head at her. “I’m not done yet babe…”

“Mother of goblin nuts,” their healer muttered. “There’s more?”

Nodding, he continued. “Now I also get 100 to Dexterity, my Vampiric touch heals for twice as much, and there is an ability useable once a week called Shatter that can damage or possibly destroy a piece of armor or a shield if the quality isn’t good enough.”

“Damn… that’s amazing bud,” Max said as he patted his friend on the shoulder. “Congrats!”

“Five hundred points… does that mean my bow could do the same?” Cordellia asked.

“If it evolves,” Max replied with a shrug. “Did it say what caused it to do so?”

Fowl shrugged as well. “No… After I bashed in this thing's head, the notification came, and I immediately felt the increase in power. All I can say is you’re definitely getting our firstborn named after you.”

Max grinned as their healer frowned.

“Give a dwarf a magical hammer and he’ll promise you anything,” Batrire said.

As everyone else came to congratulate their warrior on his weapons upgrade, Max turned and looked out across the rocky landscape they had been fighting on for over ten hours.

“What are you thinking?” Tanila asked as she stood next to him.

“Lots, but right now, just how far this goes. Like that first floor, this spread out in every direction, and none of these kobolds want to chat, even when I speak their language. None of them are…” he paused and watched her expression change. “Strong compared to me, but the stat gains were nice off that rare spawn.”

“And Cordellia needed the loot,” she replied.

Nodding, he was glad their archer had gotten the piece. No one else would listen to her initial complaints, and after the first few tears, she gladly sported the chest piece that matched the kobold’s color.

Smiling, Max summoned his weapon and shield for a moment.

[Status Check]

*****

Max Hoste

19-Year-old Human Male

Level 1

Exp 781/1000

Tower Experience: 70.0%

Base	Bonus	Items	Total
STR: 1236	+2410	+735	4381
DEX: 1236	+2410	+630	4276
CON: 1236	+2410	+735	4361
INT: 1018	+1985	+165	3168
WIS: 1005	+1960	+165	3130

Defense of the Dragon - 35.5%

Defense of the Demon - 35.5%

Demon Essence: - 1314

World Champion: - 20% Stat Increase

Bloodline: - 60% of the required 100% unlocked

Tower Stat Bonus: - 10%

Tower 60th Floor Bonus: - 5%

*****

Staring at his stats, he couldn’t help but smile. There was a reason why he could cut these kobolds down with ease. Thankfully Consume was still granting him stats, it was just the lack of skills that was getting annoying.

“Max?”

Tanila’s question brought him out of his stupor and he smiled.

“Sorry, just looking at my stats.”

She groaned and smiled.

“You know you’re not the only golden child anymore,” Tanila said. “Batrire and I both have two stats over 250 now, thanks to all those potions. Cordellia and Fowl are close to a second if they get lucky on another potion.”

“And here you thought you’d only get one,” Max replied. “I guess you really are special.”

She gave him a wag of her middle finger, laughter coming from the other three who appeared to have noticed her rarely used gesture.

“You two need a moment, or are we good to keep fighting?” Fowl asked. “I’ve got a hankering to see how much more damage I can do with this thing.”

Motioning with his hand, Max gestured for his friend to lead the way.

“Warriors first.”

“Damn right,” Fowl replied.

***

Their dwarven warrior was having a blast, hitting harder and moving slightly faster. He surprised Max and changed up the skills he would upgrade. In the end, Fowl had upgraded his Thorn ability to Rare, and the damage it reflected was noticeable.

Each attack their warrior blocked or allowed through caused blood to flow freely from the kobolds.

I wonder if that is the same rank as Dagon’s… Based on what I see it might be.

“Hey, Fowl,” Max called out as they finished up the pack before the tower floor portal. “Do you mind if I smack you once we return to the Faction grounds?”

“What?! Why… wait…” A grin appeared on Fowl’s lips. “You want to see how much it hurts, don’t you?”

Nodding, he shrugged. “I can see the difference but I want to know if you’re the same as Dagon.”

A shudder ran through their warrior as he nodded slowly. “That… was horrible. Who knew thorn auras could do that to each other? I want to know if he has a regeneration equal to yours.”

Max had already given that some thought but wondered how it would be possible for a dwarf to acquire, even if they were the king. With the bonuses from 250 stat points, he also wanted to know what a dwarf might get for having a 500 in Constitution.

“Who knows? Still I’m ready for the next floor if you are.”

Fowl gave him a nod and moved toward the portal.

“You’re a fool,” Batrire whispered as she passed Max.

“What do you mean?”

Their healer shook her head.

“Do you even know how much damage you do? I mean, I guess you do and while I am aware you can pull your punch, stop and think for a moment at the difference between how hard you hit and how these monsters hit.”

Max stood there momentarily, noticing that Tanila and Cordellia had stopped moving toward the portal, each waiting to hear his response.

“When I go all out, a lot more,” he replied.

“And when you hit the king, you were going all out.”

Nodding, he immediately realized what she was commenting on.

“Gods, I am an idiot… for the damage I was receiving and the reflection I was getting back, Dagon’s is weaker than Fowl’s now!”

Batrire bobbed her head and smiled. “Now don’t get me wrong, my legendary heal will take care of you and with the other abilities I’ve picked up from the crystals we got, I’m certain you’ll be fine, but please for the love of Ockrim, don’t go all out against Fowl. I’m afraid you’ll be like that boss who killed himself. Even worse would be if you intentionally struck Fowl’s shield.”

A thorn aura and the fire reflection… just how much damage is he giving back to those kobolds?

“Quick question since you’ve been paying more attention than me,” Max said as he tapped his chin. “How long do you think it would take before one of those kobolds had killed themselves by hitting him?”

A wicked grin appeared on their healer’s lips. “Now you’re starting to see it, Max. The reason why Fowl could kill the ones he faced wasn’t because he did crazy damage with his hammer; it was because they had already weakened themselves so much. That’s why he didn’t offer to tank the rare spawn and just let you kill it. He was concerned it might do such a thing against him as long as I could keep him alive.”

“Wait,” Cordellia said, breaking her silence. “You’re telling me that Fowl’s put that much thought into this?”

Batrire held her head up high and gave a single nod. “He’s realized that what he does best is take damage and reflect it. Honestly I know he’s looking forward to facing the boss on the 75th floor. Part of him wants to see what happens when he activates his defensive skills and takes an empowered hit of some kind.”

Max shuddered, imagining how painful it would be to strike Fowl with an attack like that.

“Did we just find a way to break the system?” Tanila asked.

“Only time will tell,” Batrire replied as she pointed at the portal. “All I can tell you is that he is ready to test it out.”

Links

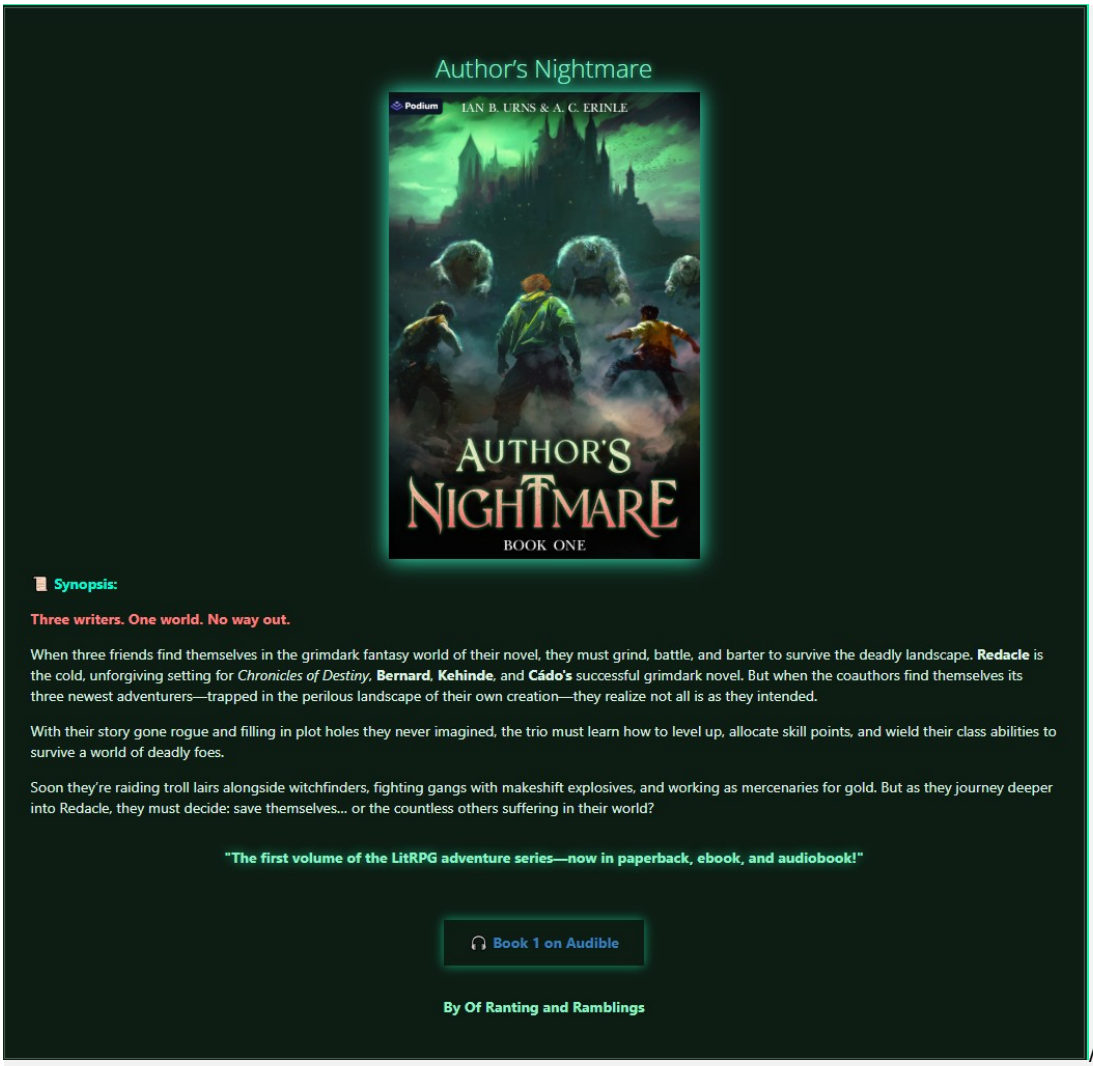
//[2025-06-24 13:54]

[None]

[F7]18/490(1) Chapter 490 - Promise Kept

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-24 16:00 [2025-06-24 13:00] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2381752/chapter-490-promise-kept; [F7]18/490(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-24 16:01],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-24 16:01],[Wayback_first2025-06-24 16:01],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-24 16:01],[this.word2025-06-24 16:04],[publish2025-06-24 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-06-24 16:00])Chapter 490 - Promise Kept - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES


Author's Nightmare
Podium
IAN B. URNS & A. C. ERINLE
AUTHOR'S
NIGHTMARE
BOOK ONE
Synopsis:
Three writers. One world. No way out.
When three friends find themselves in the grimdark fantasy world of their novel, they must grind, battle, and barter to survive the deadly landscape. Redacle is the cold, unforgiving setting for Chronicles of Destiny, Bernard, Kehinde, and Cádo's successful grimdark novel. But when the coauthors find themselves its three newest adventurers—trapped in the perilous landscape of their own creation—they realize not all is as they intended.
With their story gone rogue and filling in plot holes they never imagined, the trio must learn how to level up, allocate skill points, and wield their class abilities to survive a world of deadly foes.
Soon they're raiding troll lairs alongside witchfinders, fighting gangs with makeshift explosives, and working as mercenaries for gold. But as they journey deeper into Redacle, they must decide: save themselves... or the countless others suffering in their world?
"The first volume of the LitRPG adventure series—now in paperback, ebook, and audiobook!"
Book 1 on Audible
By Of Ranting and Ramblings
/*[L1], [L2]*/

Chapter 490 - Promise Kept

Max and the others couldn't help but smile as Fowl approached where they stood.

He was covered in blood from head to toe as the corpses of four massive centipedes that had rushed and assaulted their warrior.

After defeating the first group of three as a party, they gave Fowl the chance he wanted, letting him tank all the creatures to death. It had taken a solid minute before their dwarf had bashed in the cracked protective shell on each of their heads, sending each one to the afterlife.

"So, I think that's proof that I'm good to go," Fowl said as he shook some of the gore off his weapon. "Best of all, I only needed two heals."

"He's right," Batrire stated. "I'm not ready to toss him into a pack of ten or twenty, but it's obvious just how much that aura and his shield are helping. The two that attacked from his backside took longer to kill than the ones he blocked all the time."

“I’m guessing you want to stay in here or are we wanting to head back to the Faction?” Max asked. “It’s been a while since you’ve used a toilet.”

Even his joke didn’t cause Fowl to stop smiling. “I’ll be fine. Let’s see what we can do here. Something tells me we’ll be moving through this place like it’s nothing.”

***

Max laughed as he ran around the giant cave, dozens of the centipedes stampeding after him while Fowl finished fighting the six that were currently attempting to taste the tender flesh beneath the dwarf’s armor.

“You’ve got more coming!” Tanila shouted. “Left side!”

Without hesitating, he began creating a fireball and sent it at the three who raced out of the openings along the stone wall.

As soon as Fowl engaged the centipede they knew was the boss, it screeched, calling more into this room every thirty seconds.

“It’s almost dead!” Cordellia called out.

As the other three joined the group after him, Max watched as the fifteen-foot-tall boss slammed both pincers against Fowl’s shield again, a shriek coming as blood and ichor erupted from all the plates on its body. Its long body tightened up again, drawing upon itself before shuddering and stopped moving.

“It’s dead! Kill them!”

Once their archer announced it was over, Max began to cast spells, raining down destruction upon the long line of insects that stretched at least a hundred yards as they attempted to catch him.

Soon, the cave was silent, with no more loud cries or the sound of thousands of feet pounding into the stone.

“Well… that wasn’t fun,” Fowl muttered as he stood there, drenched in black ichor and brown blood. “I don’t want to try that again.”

“Why not?” Batrire asked. “You did fine.”

“Fine?! I had pincers and other stuff in places I don’t want to talk about,” their warrior replied. “Next time I want to attempt this, let’s make sure it’s just a single boss and not something with so many legs.”

Max couldn’t help but laugh as he watched the bodies start to fade, seeing a portal appear in the middle of the almost half-mile-wide cave.

“How about we take a break for a night? I’m certain all of us could use a bath,” he said.

“I won’t pass up a bath,” Cordellia quickly stated as she danced past Fowl and gave him a pat on the back. “Good work today, Shorty.”

“Bah, go hu…” Not finishing his statement, their warrior just grunted as their archer didn’t stop her jog to the portal.

“Almost screwed up, didn’t ya?” Batrire teased as she grabbed Fowl’s hand. “Good work catching yourself.”

“Bah, I’m trying… It’s not easy not teasing her.”

***

“So, we’re just going to sit here,” Reji said as she motioned to the four chairs Max had placed near the entrance.

“Yup,” Max replied. “I know that Everett said you all knew the plan. If everything goes according to plan, I should be back rather quickly, and we’ll be ready to hit the portal to the next floor.”

“Still uh… I mean… a couple of hours?”

He looked at the red-headed mage and smiled.

“You’re the only one standing from your team. Trust me, this is far better than being carried in the harness you all know I have.”

A few chuckles from the warrior, healer, and archer made Reji turn, who nodded and sighed.

“Well… we thank you again. It’s just weird to know this is even possible.”

Smiling, Max waved and took off running, leaving the quartet at the 40th tower floor entrance.

Less than two hours later, he was back where they were sitting, pouches full and stored inside his inventory, strapping on the harness they had all heard about and seen.

“Holy ogre nuts,” Kale exclaimed when Max appeared before them. “You’re done?!”

Nodding at the warrior, he motioned to the spot up front.

“Good thing your healer is a dwarf, or you’d be riding in this spot,” Max said. “Now then, I’m assuming the experience was good?”

“Unbelievable!” replied Reji.

“Glad to hear. Now store those chairs, and I’ll give you all a tour from the sky. We’ll be moving on to the next floor.”

Max couldn’t help but chuckle as the cries and screams came. He leaped into the air, landing on a spear made of air and sending it hurtling across the zone, with them all strapped in against him.

Oh the good old days…

***

“Now listen. This boss isn’t going to be an issue. I’m just going to kill it, and then you all can loot. Later, you’ll return with Dexic and give it a go as a team. Any questions?”

Max dropped from the walls surrounding the massive salamander when the four shook their heads. It roared and started to charge, its mouth still open and a glow of red forming inside.

Knowing the show he would be putting on, Max didn’t even bother to activate a skill, letting the creature spew a stream of lava upon him as he dashed forward, his weapon a long two-handed sword.

The flow of lava stopped coming from its head, instead gushing from its throat where the blade had severed it in half.

Without wasting time, Max quickly hacked up the body, storing the pieces and then turned back to the group who stood at the top of the wall, all four with mouths open wide.

***

“These items… they’re–”

“Don’t talk about them with anyone outside of those you trust,” Max said, cutting off Kale as he stood there, slack-jawed, admiring the belt he had just acquired. “What you get with me will most likely never be replaced, and you don’t need people to know what you have. Understood?”

Slowly, the group nodded, each standing silently, smiling, with eyes fixated on the item they had acquired.

Fowl’s going to flip… not that I’m sure Tanila will let me wear this…

[Inspect Earings]

*****

Earrings of the Salamander

+10% to all Stats

*****

Storing his newest item, Max tried to imagine the look on her face when he put them on for the first time.

“Okay, we’re back to the original plan. We’re going to try and finish all this in two days, three tops.”

“Two days,” Reji whispered. “Ten floors in two days.”

***

Max ripped his spear free from the socket of the panther, frustrated at the string of notifications.

[Consume is Locked]

[Consume is Locked]

[Consume is Locked]

This thing had three skills… I mean that one it had would have definitely been nice.

“It’s safe to come,” he shouted while starting to carve up the corpse.

All four crept out from behind the trees they had been hiding behind.

“It… teleported. Like four times. How did you track it?” Reji asked.

“The boss wasn’t that fast,” Fedyona said with a grin. “You’re just not fast enough to keep up.”

Max nodded and pointed his finger at their archer.

“She’s right. You’ll need to consider that sometimes, as your stats lag behind, you’re going to struggle. Trust me, once you get to the 51st floor, you will have to consider finding a few items that boost your weak stats a little.”

To prove a point, Max dashed around, tapping each of them on the shoulder before coming to a stop near the black chest that had appeared.

“Wait, what–”

Laughing at Reji’s confusion, he snapped his fingers.

“You’re completely focused upon Intelligence and Wisdom. While good, those aren’t going to protect you forever. Eventually, your warrior or warriors might fail to stop something from getting past them. You need to be able to react quickly and decisively. Failure to do so can result in death.”

Waving his hand to stop the question she was starting to ask, Max tapped the chest a few times.

“Everett will answer everything and Dexic is here to help also. Now then, let’s get this loot sorted out and return home. I need to go see my team and prepare for the 73rd floor.”

Grunts and the shaking of heads were his response, and Max realized he might have seemed to be bragging even though he wasn’t.

***

A few moans came from each person in the room, and Max laughed as Everett and Tom started to chuckle.

“That sounds so bad, but I remember making the same noise,” their trainer said. “Still… the fact you acquired enough gems for everyone in your party and took a team through ten floors in two days is…”

“Impossible,” Everett said. “They wanted me to tell you thank you. Each of them smiled as I complimented them on their newest gear additions. They also all shot me down about telling me the stats. That good?”

Shrugging, Max couldn’t help but grin. “If you want, I can take you and Tom when my timer cools down, and we can run the 49th boss. The other option is to join Dexic with me when we do the 50th floor and above. Whatever drops off the 55th-floor boss will be an upgrade somewhere.”

Both men looked at each other and Max was certain Tom and Everett had the biggest smiles they’d ever shown right now.

“You’d do that? For us?!”

Nodding at his trainer, Max motioned with his head to his team.

“We’ve got three floors to get done, and then we can plan on that. Tell Dexic to plan on not being in the tower four days from now. Hopefully, we’ll be done by then.”

“Three floors in four days… and that’s in the seventieth floors,” Everett said quietly. “Max, you’re a monster. No… all of you are monsters.”

Fowl let out one last shudder and set his empty pouch on the table. “That was the last one! Now I’m maxed out again! 12.5% bonus from the first 50 floors of the tower since we’ve traded in all our tower experience!”

His friend stood up and approached him, hugging him.

“Thank you, Max. I can’t tell you how nice it was to not have to regrind all that,” Fowl said.

“Even if you didn’t get a shiny pair of earrings like mine?” Max asked as he equipped them.

“Gods no,” Tanila said as she glared at him. “Please… not unless we’re in the tower.”

Laughter filled the room as Max brushed his ear with a finger, showing off his newest loot acquisition.

A groan from Tanila made everyone laugh even harder, and finally, Max put them away and moved to sit by her.

Links

//[2025-06-24 16:04]

[L1] https://i.imgur.com/LydOZVW.jpg

[L2] https://www.audible.com/pd/Authors-Nightmare-A-Grimdark-Isekai-LitRPG-Audiobook/B0F9H84YWY

[F7]19/491(1) Chapter 491 - Rakonath's Call

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-25 16:00 [2025-06-25 16:01] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2384157/chapter-491-rakonaths-call; [F7]19/491(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-25 16:01],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-25 16:01],[Wayback_first2025-06-25 16:00],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-25 16:00],[this.word2025-06-25 16:02],[publish2025-06-25 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-06-25 16:00])Chapter 491 - Rakonath's Call - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[L1]

Chapter 491 - Rakonath's Call

“So you know what tomorrow means?” Batrire asked as they all climbed out of the carriage.

“Another boss,” Fowl answered, his voice peppy.

“No... I mean, yes, but not just that,” their healer replied. “Three-fourths through the tower. I...” She paused as she spoke, looking at them for a moment. “This process, the speed of everything we’ve done. It’s not even been two years, and we’re blazing through it like it’s nothing.”

Max saw all his friends smiling as they considered what had just been said.

Not even two years... she’s right. Lifetimes are spent trying to get just halfway, and we’re well beyond that.

“I guess that means a celebration after we take down the boss,” Max said as he held out his hand to Tanila. “Think about what you all might want to eat, and I’ll let Everett know.”

“That’s what I like about you, Max,” Fowl said. “Already planning on celebrating the victory.”

***

Max sat there bouncing Callie on his knee, laughing and blowing raspberries as she giggled and babbled.

“Who would have thought my brother, the hero, is also the tamer of children?” Stacy said. “I guess you’ll do rather well when you two have your own.”

Tanila nodded and leaned against him, her finger gently tickling under the baby's chin. “He’ll do great. The best is that I can let him stay up all night while I rest. Perks of not needing to sleep.”

“I still can’t believe how much you’ve grown,” his mother said. “Where did my skinny boy who never seemed to gain any weight no matter how many sweets he ate disappear to? Who is the man that sits here now?”

Glancing at her, he shrugged and grinned. “I’m still the same Max, just different. Besides, I–”

MAX! I NEED YOU!

His knee froze mid-bounce, and it took only a second for him to react, so he handed his niece to Tanila and stood.

“Rakonath needs me! I need to go!”

“Do I–”

He shook his head as everyone started to get up.

“Stay, I’m not sure, I’ll be back!”

One moment he was on the couch, enjoying a rare moment with his family and the next he was out the door of their apartment. The second he was in the hallway, Max used his skill to travel to the area he knew his dragon would be near.

[Planetary Travel - Waypoint]

Clouds covered the sky, and it felt like a storm was moving in as he hovered in mid-air. Sensing the direction Rakonath was from him, he took off like a bolt of lightning.

What is it?!

Aerthen! She called to me!

Both man and dragon raced towards each other, like shooting stars on a collision course they met, slowing down immediately as Max almost slammed into his friend's silver scales.

Is she–

YES!

[Planetary Travel - Waypoint]

High in the air near the volcanoes where the red dragon lived, a storm was erupting in the night sky.

The glow of red lava and a land covered in fire below illuminated the smoke that rose; yet, in the clouds off in the distance, there was a storm of a different kind.

He and Rakonath took off towards it, watching as flames caused the dark clouds to turn orange and red as lightning bolts arced through them.

Kemruss is here!

Anger and rage replaced the immediate concern Max had had. The knowledge that the dragon who had attempted to do things to the Aerthen had returned pissed him off. It was like a match landing amongst dry straw that had been doused in oil.

His weapon and shield were out and he was riding on his friend's back. Max could sense the concern flowing through his dragon.

What is it?

I'm going to eat his heart out of his chest!

The same fury and anger he felt seemed to roll off Rakonath, but it was much more primal. Each beat of his wings, drawing them closer to the battle, made it grow.

What do we do?

I'll try to hit and run. He is much larger than both of us. She knows we are coming and is headed this way.

Magical power could be felt in the clouds as Max leaped off Rakonath's back, using his own ability to fly, getting a little bit of distance between his friend as they moved through the night sky.

A form began to appear in the clouds, the shape of a golden dragon. From the distance they were, he knew immediately that the fight wouldn't be easy.

He is bigger than Igarra...

A loud roar came from Kemruss as it spotted the silver dragon, and Max could see that Aerthen appeared to be injured. Her left wing was not moving as it should. The gold dragon was attempting to come down from above and force her to the ground, and she twisted, avoiding the large claws and talons that attempted to bind her. She lost altitude in order to remain free.

Rakonath let out his roar, and a red glow began to form as he prepared to breathe flames.

Lightning danced around the gold dragon's scales, and Max could sense a build-up of power.

Careful!

No reply came from his friend as the two dragons went at each other, lighting shooting from the tip of Kemruss's snout while fire billowed forth from Rakonath's mouth.

Both dragons twisted and turned, death streaming from their beings as they avoided the attack that would have killed most people in a single hit.

NOW!

Max's presence didn't even seem to register as the gold dragon turned, chasing after the younger dragon who had come to help Aerthen.

Unsure just what kind of fight this would be, he flew right at the dragon's back, aiming for the section of scales behind the neck where it would be hard for it to reach him.

Flying as fast as possible, Max slammed into the gold scales, his weapon now a long spear with barbs set in it, not holding back as he prepared for the attack.

[Stealth]

[Detected - Stealth Broken]

[Ultimate Form]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

[Quick Attack]

Frustrated at how the gold dragon had sensed his presence the moment he had stealthed, Max still drove the tip of his weapon into the beast, piercing the scales and sending four feet of the weapon into its neck. Each subsequent strike of the rampage had driven the spear deeper, piercing the tough outer protection and incredibly strong muscles.

A roar came as it twisted immediately, spinning like a top in midair as it attempted to find the pest that had just injured it.

With a single hand holding the shaft of his weapon tightly, Max willed his weapon to shift forms. The section he held onto turned into a handle, the other part branching out inside, creating tendrils of metal that acted like hooks and barbs everywhere.

" ***I SHALL DESTROY YOU! WHO ARE YOU–*** "

Kemruss's words were cut off as Max sensed the presence of Rakonath coming, and the gold dragon had to adjust his path again, claws raking across his scales as the silver dragon took advantage of his successful strike.

A grunt and shudder came from Kemruss as Rakonath flew past, blood appearing where his strike had pierced the scales.

" ***THE MARK! YOU ARE THE ONE! DO NOT–*** "

Ignoring the roar and words directed at him, Max summoned a hammer, focusing on his Wind Mastery ability to keep him stable. He pressed against the bucking gold dragon, slamming the end of his modified weapon deeper inside.

Each strike caused his opponent to buck and twist, and a build-up of electricity formed around the golden scales.

The pain was immediate as the magical attack flowed through his weapon and into his body, but Max wasn't going to give up the wound he had created, avoiding the

snap that was sent his way, half a dozen yards separating the beast's maw and his body.

Claws moved upward at Max as it tucked both wings, dropping toward the ground, and then Kemruss twisted, halting his attempt to scratch off the flea on his back as fire erupted from underneath.

Below the massive gold dragon was Aerthen, and she roared, pouring out fire and flames.

[Regeneration]

The pain of everything intensified as both lightning and fire washed over him.

Caught in the middle of a battle between beasts most *kingdoms* would never want to face, Max summoned walls of air and ice, trying to divert the flames that covered him, casting Frost Nova and feeling his flesh and muscles regrowing as they were burnt off again and again.

You should go! Do not–

I can deal with it! Tell Aerthen to keep it up!

Kemruss fell like a rock, passing under the red dragon, who cut her flames and turned to give chase. A silver dragon now flanked her as the duo pursued the larger dragon that attempted to escape.

The warm wind of the land below felt amazing as the flames were extinguished, the smell of burnt flesh filling Max’s regenerating nostrils.

Two large gold wings spread out, beating quickly to put some distance between it and the pair of dragons.

A slight glance from a turned head showed Max a gold eye staring at him.

“ ***This fight does not concern you! Flee human! Mark or no mark, I shall end your life if you stay!*** *”*

Laughing as he held onto his weapon, Max wondered if his body looked normal or still partially burnt. Regardless, he didn’t care. Someone he called a friend had been attacked once, and this dragon had attempted to attack her again.

Bob had told him there would be moments like this, and the only way some would ever learn was to die. Seeing the glint of anger in the gold dragon’s eye told Max that this beast was one of those.

Rather than trading words, Max used the trick he had been preparing for.

Pulling the last keg of flames that didn’t end from storage, Max was grateful that Everett and Tom hadn’t complained too much about him returning it. It wasn’t full, but he knew a moment like this would eventually come up.

[Phasing]

Max’s right side, including the keg, became incorporeal as his left side held onto his weapon.

Pushing the keg as deep as possible into the dragon’s neck, Max felt Kemruss start to twist harder, sensing the dragon watching him, seeing what he was doing.

Counting the seconds in his head, Max withdrew his hand and body at the last moment, stored his weapon and leaped off the dragon.

[Demonic Teleportation]

Kemruss had attempted to spin, swiping at him with claws as he flew free. Mid-turn, the keg erupted, a muffled explosion followed by a cry of agony from the gold dragon.

A gout of flames flew upward and stuck to the outer gold scales, causing a hole in the side of his neck as his body spasmed. His wings did not flap correctly.

What was that?!

Not missing a beat, Max used his Wind Mastery to give chase, joining the two dragons as they pursued the larger one now plummeting toward the ground below.

Aerthen smiled faintly and nodded slightly as she flew past him, a glow starting to appear in her throat.

Tell her I want the kill!

Seconds passed, and then the red dragon slowed slightly.

You must claim it, or she will take it. She also says, do not think he is so easily defeated. We must –

A shimmer of light began to appear over the gold dragon’s scales, and Max knew that Rakonath’s warning was most likely about to take place.

Gone was the gout of flames that had been streaming from Kemruss’s neck, splattering fire upon his back.

With a single move, both wings snapped into position and the massive body surged forward, no longer falling without control.

A roar louder than any of the others filled the night sky.

“ ***YOU ALL THREE SHALL DIE!*** *”*

Links

//[2025-06-25 16:02]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/build-fight-survive-a-craftingfactory-builder.jpg?time=1749314281

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/119724/build-fight-survive-a-craftingfactory-builder

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[F7]20/491-1(1) Life Update

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2385724/life-update;[F7]20/491-1(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-26 16:19],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-26 16:19],[Wayback_first2025-06-26 16:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-26 16:19],[this.word2025-06-26 16:30],[publish2025-06-26 02:47],[this.Last_edit2025-06-26 02:47])Life Update - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Hey - I hate vanishing but I'm just dropping a note on why I've been quiet as of late.

For about 18 months one of my sons has been having seizures (We later learned he has been having minor ones for years before but never knew it as they were often played off as acid reflux or him just acting funny).

It's been a crazy last few months. The good news is in august we have an appt with a specialist. Which is way sooner than we had expected.

But tonight while trying to be adventurous and have some fun with friends he had another episode and it was hard on him now and everyone else.

So I just wanted to let you know why I was absent and ask for some prayers.

Thanks. Shawn

Links

//[2025-06-26 16:30]

[None]

[F7]21/492(1) Chapter 492 - Kemruss [F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-26 16:00 [2025-06-25 16:07] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2386957/chapter-492-kemruss; [F7]21/492(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-26 16:19],[word.Waybak=1 2025-06-26 16:19],[Wayback_first2025-06-26 16:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-26 16:20],[this.word2025-06-26 16:34],[publish2025-06-26 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-26 16:00])Chapter 492 - Kemruss - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2]*/

Chapter 492 – Kemruss

The power radiating from Kemruss's body felt like a drizzle that had turned into a hurricane.

Like when someone reached the 60th floor of the tower and acquired an aura, he now gave off a presence that would cause most to flee in terror.

One moment, they had been gaining on the gold dragon; the next he surged forward with a speed that seemed impossible unless it was a skill of some kind.

Like a shooting star, the massive dragon went from four hundred yards away to over two miles. Gone in an instant.

"SPREAD OUT!" Max shouted.

Both dragons didn't argue, each banking off slightly, leaving him in the middle as they flew after the male dragon.

How can he be so fast? What kind of skill would give him that kind of power?

Frustrated with himself at thinking that keg would have done more damage, Max considered if he had managed to pull out one of the trump skills that most beasts or opponents would save until they needed it.

What more does he have? Surely–

His thoughts were cut off as Kemruss came right at him. Like an arrow released from a bow, the gold dragon came, glowing with the amount of lightning that now covered each of his scales.

A forked lightning bolt shot forward, and Max did everything he could to evade the attack.

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Blink]

His skin tingled as the bright light, which gave off warmth, flew past him, illuminating the night sky as it continued its journey.

Wishing Bob was there, Max felt like not only was a part of him missing, but the assistance his skill gave during moments like this left him well aware of how much he needed to grow on his own.

A claw slashed at him, slamming into his shield and sending Max flying through the air, turning and twisting, pain coming from the speed and power behind the blow.

His bones in both arms quickly recovered, and it took him just a few seconds to re-align himself, seeing that Kemruss had flown past, not stopping after striking him.

He'll come again like that! What's your plan? None of us can take that kind of damage.

How did Aerthen get away last time?

She used her ability and returned to her cave. The problem is that Kemruss knows where that is and can track her there. Before we managed to get away because of it. Either she submits to him or we–

No... I'll do something. You two prepare for him. Try to force him to come at me.

I don't think that's going to be a problem. Look!

Rakonath's words were right as the gold dragon came again, once more focused on the man who had not only drawn blood but caused an injury that might kill a weaker dragon.

His mind raced, and Max smiled. He set himself midair as Kemruss raced toward him, mouth open wide and roaring.

Not moving, he hovered mid-air, shield and weapon ready as the gold dragon flew at him.

Max!

Ignoring the concern in his dragon's voice, Max waited, summoning an ice spear and keeping it next to him.

The mile between man and dragon was gone in a moment and as the last hundred yards began to vanish in less than a heartbeat, Max used the real skill he had been pouring mana into.

[Dimensional Space]

The largest door he could open, twenty feet tall and about twelve feet wide, appeared between him and the gold dragon.

Gold eyes blinked once as wings shifted and the maw that had been open, ready to consume him, shifted upward. Whatever Kemruss's agility was, it provided him just enough reaction time and the ability to get his head out of the way.

A howl of pain sounded as the gold dragon scraped his body against the dimensional vault, gold scales and sections of flesh sliced off instantly.

Blood cascaded from the underside of Kemruss as a gash twelve feet wide and at least ten feet deep ran from his chest and about forty feet to between both back legs.

Just as quickly as the gold dragon had begun to climb upward, the damage that had been done caused it to plummet once more toward the ground.

Still under the effect of Ultimate Form, Max flew into the rain of burning blood, taking advantage of his opponent's sudden speed loss.

With the protective layer gone, Max’s weapon carved off chunks of flesh, the bones missing in some parts of the gold dragon’s body.

Max’s sonar skill told him of talons coming in his direction, and he dodged, driving his blade deep and slicing the area of missing flesh.

Flames washed from above as he sensed Rakonath moving in to assist.

Kemruss began another descent, and Max allowed himself to smile, glad that his ability had worked like it had.

You’d be proud of me, Bob.

As the golden dragon fell, Max watched Aerthen slam into the larger dragon, her claws catching his right wing, tearing Kemruss’s golden membrane to shreds.

Lightning flashed along the dragon’s body and then sparked out, a roar of pain coming from the beast as his ability seemed to fail.

She wants to know what you want to do!

Max chased after the falling behemoth, trying to get a read on its descent as Aerthen flew off with a large chunk of Kemruss’s wing.

Let me try to end this! Give me a moment, but stay close! Tell her to be ready if need be!

Pouring as much mana as he could into the spell, Max dove toward the ground, getting before the falling dragon and setting up for what he hoped would be the finishing attack.

Kemruss’s eyes looked almost glazed over as blood rained down from his body.

Max positioned himself in the path of the falling dragon and once more opened the dimensional space where he believed it would do the most damage.

Max wasn’t sure if it was the constant turning and twisting or one last attempt not to die. Kemruss managed to get his head out of the way but not the main area of his body.

Hovering in midair, the dragon carved a twenty-foot-tall and twelve-foot-wide section through a quarter of its body and chest before it jerked and tore flesh through half of it.

Like a tomb, the gold dragon's body slammed against Max, folding over on the dimensional space.

[Harden Body]

[Bulwark]

[Armored Warrior]

His ears rang from the impact, and his sonar seemed to be distorted as flesh and bone assaulted every part of his body.

A slight opening came for a fraction of a second as the dragon's body seemed to bounce on the anchor that held it in place in mid-air.

[Demonic Teleportation]

Covered in acidic dragon blood, Max felt the warmth of the liquid that covered him, hearing the cry of pain from the beast that hung limply in the sky.

*" **How… I… am…** "*

"A fool!" Max shouted as he flew toward Kemruss's head, slamming a hammer-formed weapon into the dragon's skull.

Blood poured from his open mouth, and the gold eye that stared at him had lost the light that made it glow earlier in this fight.

Max wanted to scream more. Inside was a fire that begged for more fuel. He could see Aerthen coming close. Her fresh wounds were still seeping blood and he stopped waiting.

There was no time for words. Nothing he had to say needed to be spoken.

Every second was one gone, and soon his Ultimate Form would vanish along with the strength it provided.

Growling, he reshaped his weapon, forming a long spear and drove it into the giant golden eye trying to hide behind the eyelids.

The squelch of the noise made from his weapon didn't bother Max. Instead, he drove deeper, forcing himself into the eye socket and using Wind Magic to do so.

Another cry came from the maw near him, blood choking it slightly, and Max kept pushing, forcing himself deeper and deeper until he felt the tip of his spear strike the spot he knew was his goal.

Over and over he thrust, raging against the bone that protected Kemruss's brain, his sonar and wind skill keeping him in place as the gold dragon's head thrashed about.

A crack came and then the pressure that had held back his weapon vanished.

Cold power flooded through him as his spear pierced the brain.

[100 Strength Consumed]

[100 Dexterity Consumed]

[100 Constitution Consumed]

[100 Intelligence Consumed]

[100 Wisdom Consumed]

[Consumed is Locked] x18

[Consume is…]

A crack in his mind appeared, and a voice that Max had missed and longed for so much came through.

Max… Well done… I need more…

BOB?! What is wrong?! What do I need to do?!

Consume… power… imprisoned. I must…

His friend's voice faded and stopped, and Max yanked himself free from the gore that covered him, hovering in midair as he waited, hoping.

Rakonath flew close and Max looked at him, blinking as he realized there were tears in his eyes.

I think your friend is silent again. I'm sorry, but it's good to know he's still there.

Wiping his face, Max realized he was making no headway and stored his weapon and shield. He then retrieved a cloth and gave his hands and face a good cleaning.

Be safe, my friend. I'm glad to know you're okay. I'll consume everything I can to free you.

"Thank you."

Aerthen's words forced him to look away from the corpse he was staring at and up at the red dragon who slowly flapped her wings.

"You're welcome. That's what family does."

A low thrum came from Aerthen as she cocked her head and then let out a roar, sending up a jet of flame after the noise had finished.

"I cannot thank you enough. Even if you call me family, I am indebted."

Shaking his head, Max smiled.

"No. I'm certain I still probably owe you for dealing with Rakonath and raising him."

The red dragon’s chest shook as she thrummed loudly, and Max winked at his dragon who was growling slightly.

“Perhaps you could allow this thing to fall to the ground?” Rakonath asked. “I need to eat his heart if there is any left. And besides, you need to see if what you are hoping for is still there.”

Dismissing his dimensional space, Kemruss’s corpse fell to the ground below.

Pointing at the ground, Max winked at his friend. “Let’s go see if we can find what we’re all looking for.

***

“You did you somehow fill that space?” Aerthen said as she watched Max continue to pull chunks of flesh from the area. “I… I would have never imagined or considered using such an ability, but it is rather ingenious. Even worse is how he couldn’t heal from those injuries.”

Giving a comical bow after tossing another chunk of Kemruss’s body out, Max tapped his head.

“Well, I’ve used it before for defenses, and if I put someone in here as you know it disrupts their ability to use spells. I had hoped it would cause damage, but I didn’t even consider that it might get full like that.”

A thrum came from Rakonath who was busy feasting on more pieces of the dead dragon’s organs, having found the heart he had been looking for.

“I can only imagine what that must have felt like,” Aerthen said. “To have your scales and flesh stripped like that… it is as if I were toying with an animal of some kind.”

Max nodded as he watched her chomp onto a piece he had thrown out and begin to swallow it. “All I can say is part of me is thankful that it seems to clean itself. The amount of blood that would be in here otherwise and the smell it would cause.”

Shuddering, he moved back inside and soon had another section of dragon flesh in his hand to dispense of.

“I’m just glad you got what you were looking for,” Rakonath said between bites. “And best of all I don’t have to give you my core again.”

A thrum came from both dragons as Max nodded.

A core as big as him was on the black stone, pulsating with power.

“Part of me is a little nervous,” Max stated. He couldn’t help but frown as he now considered how dangerous the void champion would have been. “Dimensional and void magic are that dangerous?”

Aerthen’s head moved up and down as she swallowed a chunk of flesh. “Remind me never to chase you.”

Max laughed as he moved back inside. He was almost done with the task of emptying out the dimensional space before starting the task of filling it with more scales and teeth, knowing he was going to make Everett and a few other people incredibly happy.

Links

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[L1] https://i.imgur.com/3AwYIpk.gif

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/120519/the-gods-gacha-game-litrpg-meta-aware-protagonist

[L3]

[F7]22/493(1) Chapter 493 - Things That Hit Hard

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-27 16:00 [2025-06-2616:27] [F7] 1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6/7/chapter/2389548/chapter-493-things-that-hit-hard; [F7]22/493(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-06-28 11:53],[word.Waybak], [Wayback_first2025-06-28 11:53],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-28 11:54], [this.word2025-06-28 11:59],[publish2025-06-27 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-27 16:00])Chapter 493 - Things That Hit Hard - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 493 - Things That Hit Hard

Max felt pressure assault him the moment he entered the 75th floor.

It was overwhelming and seemed to dwarf anything he had ever sensed except for the void colossus, Zogooruth.

When his eyes revealed what was before him, a pit grew in his stomach and the truth of what they were about to face set in.

All around was what looked like a battlefield, except it was easily one-sided. Skeletal remains stretched in every direction, littering the dark soil, some piled up, others jutting from an eternal resting place.

“What in the gods?” Fowl asked, his voice not hiding the fear behind it.

The other three soon appeared, and their gasps and expressions told him they all recognized the sensation he was feeling.

“There’s… no portal,” Cordellia stated. “We have to fight or use a gem.”

Max nodded and grimaced, watching the walls surrounding the mile-wide battlefield. Every inch of them was made from different bones, and they appeared to be shifting slightly, creating a noise that made him shudder the first time he heard it.

Each step cracked under his feet, making sneaking along impossible.

“The ceiling,” Tanila said as she pointed upward.

Above them were more bones, with rib-like stalactites hanging down, some dripping with black, tar-like ichor.

Everywhere, the bones twitched and shifted.

“What… what are we facing?” Batrire asked. “I don’t see a boss.”

“It’s hiding, most likely in the ground or perhaps in the walls. Whatever it is, we’re in for a fight,” Max replied. “Fowl, you’re on point with them. Whatever happens and whatever comes, you have to stop it.”

Grunting, their dwarven warrior nodded, cracking his neck and rolling both shoulders as his shield and hammer were held at the ready.

“Batrire… use the buff.”

“I’ll need a minute,” she replied.

Max nodded and held up his hand. “We don’t move. Once her buff is ready I’ll move out and see what comes. You four be ready for anything.”

Max knew they couldn't hold back as their healer began casting the buff she rarely used. He could sense that they needed the 25% stat gains for a minute, even if it would be a month before she could cast it again.

Bob… this is one of those moments I’d give anything to have you back.

A slight pulse through the thread that connected him to his skill came, but no words or anything else were there. Still, it comforted him, as he wanted to believe that Bob had heard him and somehow responded.

Power filled his body as the buff settled over him and for a second, Max allowed himself to smile, knowing how much of a difference this would make.

Without waiting, he dashed forward, shield and weapon ready, moving toward a large pile of bones that stood twenty feet tall.

His speed had him there in a second. The black soil now had a furrow from where he had run, chunks of it missing and as he reached the pile, his sonar went wild.

Dodging to the left, Max summoned a wall of air, leaping onto it and jumping again as a shape erupted from the dirt under his feet.

An ivory white maw opened up, two yellow glowing eyes sunk inside a skull-like head. The creature attempted to bite him, but its massive bone claws around its mouth slammed shut.

Black ichor sprayed in every direction as the boss continued its climb from out of the soil, body twisting slightly as clawed legs pressed against the ground.

Easily thirty feet tall, its body was covered in sharp, protruding ribs, and bone and dust fragments fell from it as it moved, almost like dead skin being shed continuously.

It's fricking undead!

Flying through the air, he summoned his bow, firing arrows at the boss.

[Empowered Shot]

His summoned arrow connected against its skull, striking near the creature's glowing eye socket, causing a small chunk of bone to chip off.

That's barely anything compared to its size.

He rained down a ball of fire, having summoned his familiar, surprised at how quickly the creature could track him, twisting and turning while over fifty yards of its body had climbed onto the surface of the boss floor.

Arrow after arrow rained down and when his fireball crashed against its head, Max's sonar warned him of the incoming objects.

A storm of bone shards had flown toward him, concealed by the flames that had washed over the boss, now ignited as at least four hundred flew through the air.

[Demonic Teleportation]

The number sent from the attack and the speed at which they had come were too much for him to dodge. Unsure how much damage the foot-long bone daggers would cause, he avoided them for now, fearful of what an attack like this might do against his friends.

Sounds came from above as the attack connected with the ceiling, sending down a rain of bones that crashed into the soil.

Not waiting to be shot at again or risking having something fall upon him, Max streaked toward a middle segment, his weapon transforming into a gigantic axe.

He cleaved with everything he had, striking a small section between the segments, landing blow after blow as the boss turned and came toward him.

Flying away, Max saw he had created cracks in the area, but none of his blows were deep enough to sever the thickness of the bones.

Shite! This thing is –

A loud five-second wail came after the boss missed chomping down on him again with its claws, the wave of it making him nauseous.

Flying away, he summoned a large boulder mid-air, letting it grow until he sent it crashing down on the same area he had attacked before.

Preparing to summon another, Max stopped, seeing his friends shifting and moving, the three women all now standing on a stone wall.

Bones around the floor began moving, rejoining and forming abominations of creatures, humanoids, animals, and insects. Some were only five or six feet tall, while others were at least fifteen.

A black aura surrounded the boss, and its yellow eyes became flaming green.

It's a damn lich?!

The thought that such a creature could exist, not only an insect but also possessing the kind of magic that it did, felt completely unfair.

Spells began to erupt around his friends as they began to attack the creatures that had been summoned from the boss's wail.

At least a hundred were formed around the floor, and Max frowned, knowing that they were facing a different kind of boss than ever before.

He glanced at the timer, seeing that only fifteen seconds had passed and if he didn't do something soon, his buff Batrire had given would soon be gone.

Dropping to the floor, he raced through the summoned minions, shattering them all as his weapon transformed into a large hammer. He made his way around the dark soil, attempting to create some breathing room for himself and his allies.

Chunks of bone flew through the air as he pulverized the undead, dodging the rain of bone that came from the boss, two green eyes never stopping tracking him.

Fifteen more seconds had allowed him to eradicate almost half of the bone abominations, fire spells and wind blades sweeping out in every direction as he prepared for what he wanted to do.

Turning back to the boss, Max raced toward it, aimed at the same section he had hit before.

Leaping onto the bone section, he smashed the same spot over and over, one eye on the boss who turned in on itself, coming toward him, the other on the crack that grew.

What I wouldn't give for Ultimate Form...

The lack of that skill, still on cooldown frustrated him. None of them had believed it would be needed, every boss so far having been rather easy.

Yet now the tower had reminded them that it wasn't a walk in the park. Every skill mattered. None were to be taken for granted; right now, they were all paying the price for having believed so.

As the fissure grew deeper, Max slammed his weapon into the crack, transforming it into a long spear. He pressed with everything he had, and like a crowbar, it allowed him to apply pressure, and the noise of the bone popping came.

Using his wind magic, Max forced himself away as the section of bone broke, the large spine-like piece snapping, sending half of the boss's body crashing into the ground for a second.

Another shriek came, and Max turned, flying through the air, moving sideways and upward, to dodge the incoming rain of bones. He kept moving now, knowing it was the only thing that kept him from being pincushioned.

Still he smiled, glad to see that he could damage the boss. Knowing that meant he could use his other skills and not risk them being for nothing when he really attacked.

As he dove toward the ground, prepared to come at it again, he faltered, seeing the section he had broken off start to move.

It turned on its own, its bone legs moving as before, and moved in his direction, crushing anything in its path.

"What the…"

His words stopped as the boss opened its maw, scooping up dirt and bones, swallowing them whole as it made its way around the floor toward him.

Sections of bone began to regrow along the area he had injured and a new section was starting to form.

Curse words ran through his mind, but Max didn't wait. There were barely ten seconds left on Batrire's buff, and if a moment was going to come to use it, he had to go now, taking a chance as the boss attempted to heal itself.

[Haste]

Vanishing for a moment, he came at the boss's head, his two-handed hammer aimed at the section of bone right between those green eyes.

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Magical Strike]

[Berserker]

[Rampage]

A sound like thunder erupted from where his weapon connected. It struck three times, seemingly as a singular blow.

Bone flew in every direction, a crack forming like a canyon, splitting the head in half.

As the bone disintegrated under the blows, there was an opening, darkness inside.

There was no brain, no soft material to crush under the weight of the metal. Instead, it was an aura that blew him back a step.

Wind Mastery kept him in place as his hammer continued to land blows. Like a dwarf in a mine, Max repeatedly struck as if searching for something precious. Each blow sent chunks of bone in every direction, yet the green glow in the eyes of the boss didn’t fade.

They continued to burn, and his sonar told him the boss was angling upward slightly.

[Bulwark]

[Armored Warrior]

[Harden Body]

Fragments of bone came at him, striking his armor and bouncing off as his skills took effect.

A shower of daggers made from bones rained upon him as the boss rose and started to fall.

They came from both sides, and his mind tried to comprehend how it could attack from so many directions. Then, the section of the piece he had hacked off reached the edge of his sonar.

Two pieces, they–

His thoughts had to end as he realized what would happen next.

[Blink]

A loud crashing noise came as Max appeared fifty yards away, watching as the boss’s maw bit down on the section of bone it had crashed into, chomping down on its own body.

The damage he had just done was starting to heal as the undead centipede began to eat itself, horking down giant bites of bone.

Curses came to mind as he hovered in mid-air, unable to attack, knowing that doing so wouldn’t do anything.

The strength of Batrire’s buff and his skills wore off, leaving him weaker and facing a boss who was healing the head he had almost smashed in half and growing more sections along its backside.

Glancing at Tanila and the others, he saw they were still fighting the last of the creatures that had come toward them.

None of them looked in real danger yet as Fowl dealt with the summoned bone beasts that attacked. Arrows and spells connected, slowing down and destroying whatever got close to them. Tanila turned and smiled at him briefly.

At that moment when their eyes locked, the boss descended back under the dirt floor.

Links

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[None]

[F7]23/494(1) Chapter 494 - Breaking Rules

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-06-28 16:00 [2025-06-27 12:00] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2392127/chapter-494-breaking-rules; [F7]23/494(1[this.Waybak=5 2025-07-02 13:04,=4 2025-07-01 13:34,=2 2025-07-01 13:34,=1 2025-06-30 7:45],[word.Waybak=5 2025-07-02 13:04], [Wayback_first2025-06-30 7:45],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-30 7:45], [this.word2025-07-02 13:08],[publish2025-06-28 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-28 16:00])Chapter 494 - Breaking Rules - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

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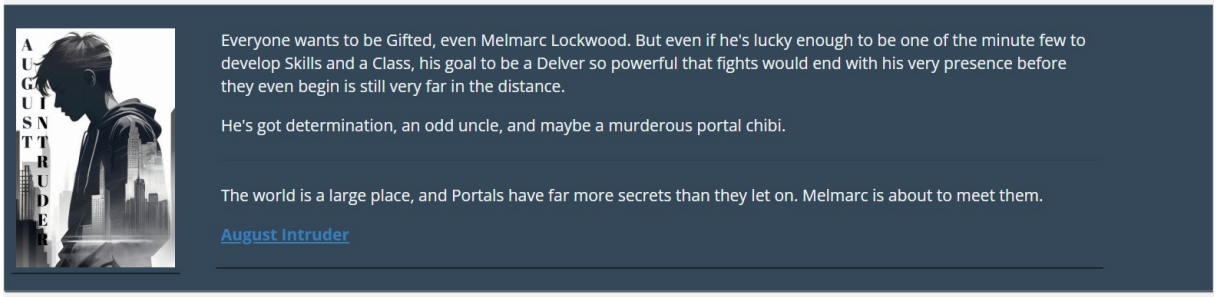
AUGUST INTRUDER
Everyone wants to be Gifted, even Melmarc Lockwood. But even if he's lucky enough to be one of the minute few to develop Skills and a Class, his goal to be a Delver so powerful that fights would end with his very presence before they even begin is still very far in the distance.
He's got determination, an odd uncle, and maybe a murderous portal chibi.
The world is a large place, and Portals have far more secrets than they let on. Melmarc is about to meet them.
August Intruder

Chapter 494 - Breaking Rules

“What are we going to do?!” Fowl shouted as Max came near them.

“I don’t know! I hit it with everything I had, and it still survived. Any ideas?”

The five of them looked at each other and their ranger spoke first.

“My arrows aren’t doing anything against the boss. I sent a normal attack, and it basically just bounced off. I could use one of my boss arrows and empower it, but since you weren’t having any luck, I preferred not to do so.”

“Both of our spells are doing little damage outside of the crushing rock one,” Tanila stated. “From what I saw, yours didn’t have enough time to build up. Perhaps a bigger one might be more effective. And don’t forget to use your Stone Mastery to speed it up.”

Wincing, Max realized he had forgotten to attempt that, trying to focus on so many different things and knowing that Bob would normally handle and do that.

“Those spawns were weak once they got in close,” Fowl said as he tapped his hammer against his shield. “The aura did a lot of damage to them, and only a few managed actually to land a blow against me. I still got taunt up as well.”

Max looked at Batrire who shrugged.

“I’m fine on the mana. All I know is we’re not making much headway against that boss. Still, there are fewer bones on the floor than before.”

He could see that their healer was right.

Some of the larger piles were gone, and he wasn’t sure if those had turned into creatures he had slain or if the boss had consumed them somehow.

“Start storing the ones near us. I’ll get to work grabbing the others,” Max said as he pointed at a larger pile. “If we can limit what it can eat, then we can hopefully limit how it heals.”

“While also maybe preventing it from summoning more,” Tanila said.

Nodding at her, he ran to the nearest stack of bones, grabbed them and stored them in his necklace.

Like a street sweeper, Max ran around the tower floor, plucking bones and cleaning up the area.

A loud shriek came as the boss returned, its skeletal head now fully healed and two green eyes scouring the black dirt area.

It came after him, and he ignored it as much as possible, using his speed to stay ahead of it as he cleaned up the floor.

Wish you were here to tell me if you think this might work again...

His sonar started to go off, and Max saw that whatever black aura had been coming from the boss earlier had tripled in size, now coating the bones with a glistening black sheen. It had become like a liquid, and when it launched a salvo of bone shards at him, they were covered in the same dark sheen.

Grimacing, Max zigged and zagged, sensing that the rain of bone shards continued to follow him. The boss unleashed its attack for over ten seconds, littering the floor with black bones.

Finally, feeling like he was getting a true understanding of the boss, Max started to summon a stone spear, pouring mana into it. He ran in almost a circle, keeping it

close to him. After a few moments, the boss began nearly to trample its own body as it chased him, still sending more bone shards at him.

It began to adapt to his movements, and over two dozen of the black bones struck Max. His shield could only stop a few, as he had to adjust his direction to the outside of the circle he had been making or be overwhelmed by the attack.

Pain radiated through his lower legs and arms, where a few of them pierced his armor.

[Poison Resisted]

The notice appeared multiple times, and his regeneration ability forced the bones from his body, revealing that they had small hooks that tore his flesh even more.

Not wanting to experience that again, Max sent small bolts of fire at the boss's eyes, knowing no damage would be done, instead wanting to try and disrupt its focus.

They traded spells, black bones occasionally striking him, while flames peppered the green eye sockets and the giant skull.

When he knew there was enough mana in the stone spear and that he was ready for the next part, Max changed his normal pattern, running away from the center area they had been circling, and this time stretching out the boss's body.

Taking to the air, he darted just slightly above the boss's height, preparing for the spell he hoped would work.

[Spell Burst]

His spear erupted from the sky, hurtling at the elongated bone body, doubling in size. Max sped it up using his Stone Mastery ability, causing it to penetrate and crush off over two-thirds of the boss's body.

A shriek came, and Max watched as the centipede-like skeleton stumbled a few dozen yards, taking a moment to right itself as it suddenly found itself much smaller.

Dropping to the ground, Max ran past the boss, sending another bolt of fire at it, sensing it turning and chasing him.

With his skill, Max dismissed his summoned stone spear, sending the pieces that took a moment to dissolve out of the way.

The bisected area began to move toward the boss, which was opening and closing its maw, its giant claws slamming together with force.

Standing between the two pieces of the boss's body, Max came to a halt, waiting as he prepared for what he knew would happen.

[Dimensional Space]

As with Kemruss, he believed this might just work but had to wait until the very last second to prevent it from dodging.

Opening the twenty-foot-tall door, Max watched as the claws began to close upon him and the section he had cut off.

He angled the opening, unsure what would happen if it tried to bite the dimensional space. Max watched as the bone claw on the right vanished inside, the boss trying to slow itself as it pulled upward.

[Demonic Teleportation]

He appeared above the boss's head, watching as the right side of its face and claw vanished inside.

A loud noise came from the back half of the body, slamming into an invisible barrier, causing it to rise off the ground. Bony legs moved as the force radiated through the skeletal frame.

Willing it to close, the doors shut, and a shriek much different than before came as Max’s ability took off a third of the skull.

His hammer was moving, bashing against the back half of the skull using wind magic and stone magic, trying to send it forward as he readjusted the dimensional space again, this time to the left.

A giant boulder, the size of a four-story house, fell upon the boss’s back about twenty yards away, causing the whole body to buckle. Max knew Tanila had used her ability like he had, draining mana for increased damage.

The shockwave and his assault forced the boss that was trying to pull back into the opening. He willed the doors shut, removing the other claw and about a third of the remaining skull.

With his Stone Mastery, Max cut apart the stone boulder, forming a collar, and wedged it around the beast, sealing the gaps as it thrashed around.

It attempted to bend toward the ground, yet Max fought against it with every bit of power, the stone collar struggling against the force of the boss.

“TAUNTING!”

Fowl’s shout came as the boss gave up its current attempt, snapping its head to the left and at the dwarf who stood upon the black dirt, banging his hammer against his shield.

“Come get some!”

An arrow took off a four-foot chunk of the left side, their archer having sent an empowered shot with her special arrows.

Their warrior was at the max range, and he gave a slight nod, a grin visible under his beard.

Letting the magic go, the stone collar fell apart and the boss took off at their warrior.

[Dimensional Space]

Once more, the door opened up right before the boss crashed into Fowl, and with both claws gone and a large chunk of the skull missing, it dove head-first into the opening.

When the door closed, separating the skull from the spine a gust of wind exploded from where the bones had connected, sending up a black cloud that made seeing impossible.

“Where is it?!” Fowl cried out.

Max’s sonar could make sense of some of the shapes in the cloud of dust, and he could sense that no movement was coming from the body that lay beneath him.

“It’s dead! The experience!”

Cordellia’s voice carried out in the quiet of the boss floor as Max used his wind magic to sweep away the dirt, clearing the air and allowing them to see what they had accomplished.

“What in the gods was that?” Fowl asked as Max came to land next to him.

“I told you what I did to Kemruss,” he replied. “It’s the same thing.”

“Well… yah but seeing that in person… I mean… can you do that against every boss?”

Bobbing his head, Max grinned.

“Who knows? I’m sure it can’t work forever, but while it does, I’ll gladly take the easy win.”

“Easy win… yeah… that’s what I call this.”

Both men laughed as they moved to where their friends were.

“Nice shot,” Max said as Cordellia drew near.

“Says the warrior who almost soloed it,” she replied.

“No… this was a team win. Tanila’s boulder, your arrow, Fowl’s taunt. All that allowed me to do what I did. Without each of us working like that, I’m unsure how it would have gone.”

“Well, I’m just glad Tanila told us what to do,” Batrire said. “She knew what you were doing, and I’ll admit at first it seemed crazy, but I’m glad it worked out. Besides, there appears to be an ugly chest waiting for us to open.”

They all turned to where their healer motioned and saw a white raid-sized chest on the black dirt a few hundred yards away.

“Race you to it,” Max said as he winked at Fowl.

“Bah, with these legs? I’d win for sure.”

Laughing both men started to jog toward the chest, leaving the other three to quickly follow them.

Stopping at the edge of it, Max saw that it looked to be made of bone like the boss had been and a relief of the entire creature was carved around the outside.

“That’s ugly,” Cordellia stated. “I mean… those tiny legs almost appear to look like they’re moving.”

“Still, it’s our loot,” Fowl replied as he pulled out a stool and stepped onto it. “So, going to open it?”

Seeing his friend looking at him, Max nodded and put his hand on the lid, thrusting upward with his hand.

Nothing happened, and he gave it one more try before stopping and smacking his tongue against the roof of his mouth a few times.

“Uh… I think it’s one of those.”

“Ockrim does love me,” Fowl muttered as he put a hand on the chest.

Soon, all five of them touched it, and the chest began to glow, giving off a green aura before turning yellow.

A click came, and the lid lifted on its own.

“Well, I’ll be an ogre’s girlfriend,” their dwarven warrior said as he peered inside first.

“That poor ogre,” Batrire teased as she pulled out a stool and stepped up on it as well.

A second after looking in, she snorted and gave Fowl a shove.

“I guess I can be the ogre's girlfriend as well.”

Max couldn’t take it any longer and motioned to Tanila and Cordellia. They all stepped forward, looking inside.

“This ogre’s going to have a lot of girlfriends,” their ranger said, her voice unable to hide her excitement.

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/august-intruder-aadax2-4rhq.jpg?time=1706929386

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/81025/august-intruder/chapter/1506047/one-everythings-going-to-be-alright

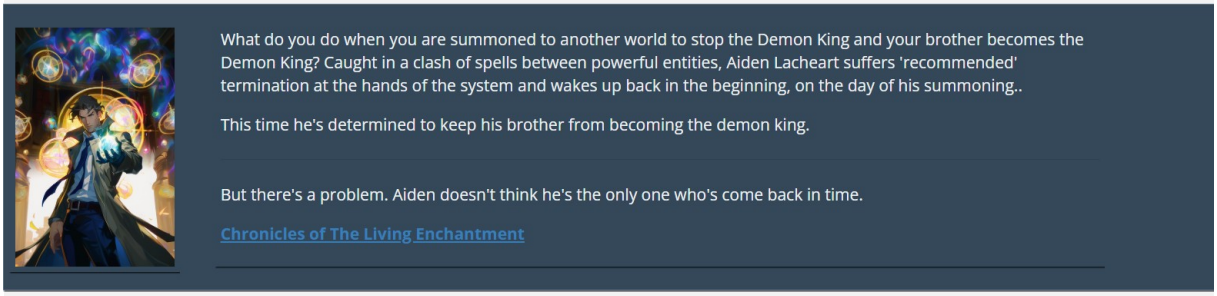
[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/81025/august-intruder/chapter/1506047/one-everythings-going-to-be-alright%3E%3Cspan%20style=

[F7]24/495(1) Chapter 495 - Everyone Love Loot

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6/chapter/2394597/chapter-495-everyone-love-loot;
[F7]24/495(1[this.Waybak=5 2025-07-02 13:04,=4 2025-07-02 13:33,=2 2025-07-01 13:33,=1 2025-06-30 7:45],[word.Waybak=5 2025-07-02 13:04],[Wayback_first2025-06-30 7:45],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-06-30 7:46],[this.word2025-07-02 13:26],[publish2025-06-29 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-29 16:00])Chapter 495 - Everyone Love Loot - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2],[L3]*/


What do you do when you are summoned to another world to stop the Demon King and your brother becomes the Demon King? Caught in a clash of spells between powerful entities, Aiden Lacheart suffers 'recommended' termination at the hands of the system and wakes up back in the beginning, on the day of his summoning..
This time he's determined to keep his brother from becoming the demon king.
But there's a problem. Aiden doesn't think he's the only one who's come back in time.
Chronicles of The Living Enchantment

Chapter 495 - Everyone Love Loot

Inside the chest was a deeper purple swirling vortex, and inside it were two items for each. Tanila had two bone rings waiting for her to claim while Fowl had a ring and a bone chest piece. Batrire mimicked their mage with two rings as her reward, and their ranger drooled over the bone pants and helm that awaited her.

Max stared at a large shield that looked made of bones and a ring that appeared darker than everyone else's.

Four large pink crystals radiated with power.

“So… two items each,” Fowl said quietly. “It’s been a while.”

Everyone nodded, and as they all started to grin and smile, they each reached in, pulling out the rewards, excited to see what they had just acquired.

[Inspect Ring]

*****

Bone Ring of Darkness

+15% to all Stats

Shadow Aura - Darkness surrounds you.

*****

Max felt something weird coming from his ring as he held it, watching a single black line run through the middle of the white bone.

Slipping it on, he felt a coolness surround him. A chill ran through him, and he saw everyone near him take a step back.

“Uh… Max?”

Tanila’s question and her expression made him pull the ring off. The boss floor felt slightly warmer, and his team noticeably relaxed.

“What was that?” Fowl asked. “You suddenly felt… wrong.”

“Like in what way?”

Their warrior frowned and shrugged. “Like… something that might want to attack us? I don’t know how to explain it other than that. Almost as if you shrouded yourself with the aura the boss had.”

The three women all bobbed their heads in agreement at that statement.

“And none of yours has anything like that?” Max asked.

“Nope,” Cordellia said as she tapped the bone helm she wore. “Beyond what I’m guessing makes me look like some bad arse, I get an ability called Hawk Eye which allows me to see things clearly twice as far for a minute and is usable every twelve hours.”

“Ogre shite,” Fowl cursed. “I didn’t get any skills with my stuff.”

Both Batrire and Tanila shook their heads, and Max frowned, storing his ring and pulling out the shield next.

[Inspect Shield]

*****

Shield of the Ivory Maw

+75 STR/DEX/CON

Bone Rain - Once every 24 hours the user may summon a cone of bone daggers. Fifty daggers will be sent flying in the direction the shield is facing.

*****

He studied the large shield, trying to ignore the image of the boss’s head etched on the outside of it. All along the sides were nubs of bone, which totaled fifty when he quickly counted.

“That’s not as pretty as your other one,” Batrire said. “Still I don’t feel like I need to run away when you hold it.”

“Well, it does have an ability,” Max replied. “I'm guessing I can summon a bone attack, similar to the boss’s once a day.”

“Ockrim… where is my love?” Fowl cried out.

He gave his dwarf friend a pat on the back and motioned to the chest piece still waiting for their dwarf.

“You going to check it out?”

Nodding, Fowl pulled out a breastplate resembling Max’s shield, with the same ugly image on the front.

“Gods, it’s ugly but the stats… so nice!”

One moment, the gold-colored plate chest piece was present, and the next, it was replaced by the newer one.

“Going to share?” Cordellia asked.

“Nope! Let’s just say it’s much nicer than my old one!”

As the dwarf and ranger laughed, Max reached inside and took the four crystals, feeling the amount of power in each, quickly storing them all.

“Well, the good news is we got a lot of bones for Alfreda,” Max said as he summoned his dimensional space. “She’ll be happy to–”

His voice failed as the doorway into his storage area opened, and the room was empty.

“Where did all the bones go?!” Tanila exclaimed.

Shaking his head, Max peered inside, moving in and sensing his dwarven friend following.

“This thing had to be full,” he muttered. “I mean everything that was in here was–”

“What’s this?” Fowl asked, bending down to pick up a green colored coin just a few feet inside the dimensional space. “You minting your own–”

“STOP!”

Max’s voice echoed off the purple stone blocks and his friend froze, his dwarven fingers just a few inches from the coin on the ground.

Without waiting, he moved to where Fowl was and waved him away.

“What’s wrong, Max? It’s just a coin.”

Shaking his head, Max pointed to the image of the coin his sonar revealed as he focused on it.

On one side was a horned demon of some sort, and Max realized what he had felt when he wore the ring. Even in his dimensional space and whatever magic was severed from the outside area, there was a similar connection to the coin.

“That image…” Max said slowly, “It looks like that creature I saw in the red portal that got away.”

Fowl gasped and shook his hand, rubbing them slightly.

“You sure? I mean… that was so long ago.”

Nodding at his friend, Max bent down and inspected it closer, seeing the horns and face forever seared into his memory.

“I’d bet money on it and what scares me the most is how it got here.”

“Not where the giant skull went?”

Grinning at Fowl, Max pointed at the coin. “This has something to do with it. Now then, let me go outside. I think I might have a way of finding out something.”

***

Sog’thollech was all smiles, his fingers holding the green coin as the party and the demon stood inside Max’s dimensional space.

“You never fail to surprise me, Max Hoste,” the demon said as he lifted the coin to his teeth and bit into it. “Still, you were wise not to touch this. In here, it probably wouldn’t have been a problem but once you take this outside… odds are your hairy dwarf friend wouldn’t be so hairy anymore.”

“So what is it?” Max asked. “And how did it get in here?”

“First, you’re okay if I take this? The energy in it will be great for me… bad for the owner of it.”

Nodding at Sog’thollech, everyone watched the demon smile and slide the coin into his mouth, letting out a moan as he chewed a few times and swallowed.

“Oh… that’s going to be real nice.”

Studying his demon friend, Max was glad to see he had returned to his uninjured state. Gone were all the scars, and he stood about seven feet tall, his black skin and muscular body hiding all the power that was contained within.

“Now… the coin, Sog?”

“Oh yes, so there are many demons, and the one pictured on this goes by a name I won’t utter for many reasons. He isn’t as strong as I am, but the one he is bound to… that wouldn’t be a fight I’d want to take on, even in this state. He is much older and is considered one of the greatest with what you all call Demonic Summoning.”

Sog’thollech pointed at the exit to the dimensional space.

“If you’re willing, I’d much rather prefer to chat out there. In here just feels… wrong.”

Motioning for his demon friend to lead the way, Max's mind started to consider what it meant for a demon to be *the greatest* in Demonic Summoning.

When Sog'thollech stepped outside the doorway, the demon immediately dropped to the ground, one clawed hand catching himself before face-planting into the dirt.

"Sog?!"

"I… am… fine…" the demon gasped. "The power… it all hit… at once." Taking a few deep breaths, he finally rose, holding a hand to his black chest. "I am a fool for not considering how that might have happened. The power that coin held… I underestimated it."

"How much power are we talking about?" Max asked, making sure his friend was okay.

"Almost as much as your blood gives… so a lot. Had I been weaker and attempted such a thing, I have no doubt I would have been torn apart and transformed into something… grotesque for the owner of it."

Frowning, Max motioned to Fowl and the dwarf nodded, pulling out the table and chairs he had yet to return to the Faction.

"Tell me about this demon and what he does."

Sog'thollech took the seat offered to him and waited until everyone was sitting.

"In my realm, many demons focus on different ways of acquiring power. Some do it through bonds like ours. Others enter worlds and fight for the souls of the ones they face. A special breed uses… sex to lure another species into a contract, taking their life force and oftentimes more in exchange for pleasure.

"The one you are asking about has been around for tens of thousands of years. His power is constantly growing and maintained by the demons who swear to him and allow themselves to be bound by those who practice the art of summoning. Each trades a portion of what they gain for a… fast track to acquiring power. How you summoned me is considered rare, but it does happen.

"Chaos rules our domain, and yet there are rules which most will never break. The fact that I have come into power outside his domain is uncommon. Where I stand now has created a few problems between him and I as he sees the potential power he lost out on. Still, there is little he can do at this point."

"Why is that?" Cordellia asked.

Sog'thollech smiled at the ranger who leaned back a little in her chair.

"Because… there are things in place which protect me, and I prefer to keep some things a secret. Not that I don't trust you, but I am sure there are secrets you wouldn't want to tell me."

A crimson color filled Cordellia's cheeks, and she nodded slowly. "I'm sorry for prying."

“No need to apologize. I am intrigued by how Max and the rest of you seem as strong as you are. The power you possess and the speed at which it comes go against all the knowledge I know in my realm. Very few can hope to achieve your power in a lifetime, let alone in a year.”

“It’s all because of him,” Fowl said, pointing a stubby finger at Max. “As you can guess, he’s special.”

Laughter came from the demon who banged his hand against the table, causing it to crack where he struck it.

“Oh! Forgive me, I didn’t mean to do that!”

Max waved a hand and used his Wood Mastery, repairing the broken area in a few seconds.

“See!” Fowl exclaimed. “Even a broken table is no match for his power.”

Everyone joined in, laughing as Max rolled his eyes.

“One last question Sog, before we need to go. This... demon. Should we be worried?”

A huff came from his demonic friend. “Should you two ever come face to face, he would not be an easy foe. The truth is… You are still weaker than him. I doubt, however, you will encounter him face to face. For him to leave his domain would require him to sense a very large gain in power or a command from the Demon King.”

“And I doubt we would end up in your world?”

Laughing, Sog’thollech shook his head.

“For my kind's sake, I hope not. I fear too many of my brothers and sisters would fall to you and your party. Even worse would be the hordes that would come at you. I cannot tell you how much fun it is anytime someone is foolish enough to venture into our domain. Often, a group has come to *ria* their world of evil.

“The irony that their own people are the ones who summoned us there first is lost on them, but still their souls and flesh are delicious.”

Max chuckled as he watched their ranger and healer wince at the mention of eating flesh.

“Well on that note, I think we have a faction we need to return to,” he said. “Until next time.”

Sog’thollech let out a long laugh and nodded. “As always, I look forward to it. Thank you again, Max Hoste, for the treat!”

Links

//[2025-07-02 13:26]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/living-enchantment-96662.jpg?time=1714966572

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/86184/chronicles-of-the-living-enchantment/chapter/1626524/prologue-prisoner-234502385739

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/86184/chronicles-of-the-living-enchantment/chapter/1626524/prologue-prisoner-234502385739%3E%3Cspan%20style=

[F7]25/496(1) Chapter 496 - Seeing Max's True Power

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-06-30 16:00 [2025-06-30 7:49]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2397213/chapter-496-seeing-maxs-true-power; [F7]25/496(1[this.Waybak=3 2025-07-02 13:04,=2 2025-07-01 23:43,=1 2025-07-01 13:35],[word.Waybak=3 2025-07-02 13:04],[Wayback_first2025-07-01 13:35],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-01 13:34],[this.word2025-07-02 13:42],[publish2025-06-30 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-06-30 16:00])Chapter 496 - Seeing Max's True Power - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 496 - Seeing Max's True Power

Everett started to laugh as Tom stood there slack-jawed.

“A single hit…” their trainer said slowly. “He killed that in a single hit.”

“You doubted anything less?” Dexic said as she slapped him on the back. “I mean, you watched him fight in the arena, and you know what floor he’s on.”

“I… I mean, yeah, but seeing it in person is… kind of mind-blowing,” Tom stated. “You and I both know those would tear us a new one, and he’s out there cutting them down like stalks of wheat.”

“Which is just proof of what real power looks like,” Everett said. “Now then, if you’re done being so dramatic, I’m returning to my book. You and I both know we’ve got nothing to do for a while.”

***

Max couldn’t help but grin as he sensed Everett, Tom, and Dexic taking in the sight of the tower floor beneath them.

After strapping them into the harness he used for his team, the golden warrior was on his back, knees bent slightly, while the other two men were strapped to his shoulders.

“This is a little bit… humiliating,” Everett shouted. “Don’t get me wrong, I won’t complain about the fact we’re covering ground like crazy, but I feel like your sister's daughter being packed around.”

“Well as long as you don’t crap yourself, we’ll be fine,” Max replied.

“Tell me,” Dexic said as she leaned her head back slightly, “how often do you travel like this? I heard about the harness, but seeing how easily you do this tells me it’s well-practiced.”

“I could have put you in my dimensional space,” he replied, “but then they wouldn’t get a chance to see what everything looks like from up here. Besides, you and I know we’ve got a bet, and I intend to win it.”

A groan came from the golden warrior as both men on his shoulders shifted slightly.

“What bet?” Tom asked.

“You’ll have to wait and see,” Max replied. “Now then, we’ll be reaching the portal soon. Just remember to keep your stomach tight.”

***

Tears continued rolling down Fowl’s and Batrire’s cheeks as Dexic continued her retelling of the day's events.

“And then Tom puked all over himself–”

“Dexic…” Everett said, cutting her off. “I thought we agreed we’d only mention him doing that once.”

“It’s not my fault!” Tom exclaimed, ignoring the howl of laughter from Max’s party. “He didn’t tell me we were going to drop like that. And then the sudden stop at the bottom!”

“Oh, I hate that part,” Cordellia said, wiping her face with the back of her hand. “Max does that just to be mean I think.”

“Bah! I lost ten gold!” Dexic roared. “He knew! Max knew what he would do and lured me into a trap. Part of me wanted to accuse him of working with Tom with how easy it all happened.”

Laughter and smiles came from everyone, but the Faction trainer who had held up his middle finger more in this one moment than most could remember in a year.

“You seem to have had a lot of fun,” Tanila whispered.

Nodding, Max squeezed her hand, still smiling from ear to ear.

“Watching them and allowing them to play on those levels was fun. Both of them handled themselves well.”

“You know none of you really know what pain is until Max picks you up by your armpits and uses you as a battering ram to kill something. The stuff that gets in your

beard….” Fowl said as he shuddered a little bit. “Let’s just say you quickly learn to keep your mouth shut.”

Both of the older men grimaced slightly as they shook their heads.

“I think I’ll pass on that if possible,” Everett stated. “Now then, you all are returning to the tower tomorrow, correct?”

“Aye,” Batrire replied. “Not all of us get a free ride like some people.”

“Oh really?” Fowl asked, his voice rising a little as he gave her a look. “We don’t get a free ride?”

“Bah, perhaps you do, but I always carry my weight. ‘ *Heal me, Batrire! Cure my poison, Batrire!* ’ Unlike some, I don’t get just to harvest testicles all day long.”

Laughter once more filled the room as their warrior held up two middle fingers at their healer.

***

Max couldn’t help but laugh as Fowl shouted ‘ *Poisoned!* ’ for at least the hundredth time today.

Each insect they were fighting had a bad habit of exploding, sending out different colors of blood that all had some nasty effects.

“Good thing I’m not getting carried!” Batrire teased as she healed their warrior.

“What’s the plan?!” Cordellia shouted as she prepared to jump off the airwall she shared with the other two women. “We coming down or what?”

“Stay up there,” Max replied, flicking his weapon to clean off the blood on it. “I’ll pull more!”

She gave him a thumbs-up, and Max raced off down the tunnel, splashing water with each step.

What kind of crazy nest is this?

They had been moving through a long system of tunnels, some knee-deep with water and others as dry as a bone. Different kinds of plants grew throughout the tower floor, each casting a different light color.

Over six varieties of beetles attacked them, and while the team had no problem killing them, the poison made things difficult.

Max had repeatedly commented that he could almost kiss the gorgon, which he barely survived against. His poison resistance was paying off, and Fowl suffered the worst, especially in the first moments.

Not everyone had exploded, lulling them into a sense of safety when it started.

Coming up over a small ridge of dirt, Max saw half a dozen beetles all mulling about in the tunnel. Two of them were red, ten feet tall and easily thirteen feet long. Short

and squatty but with a pair of pincers that could hurt Fowl if not taken out quickly. Three were yellow with purple polka dots all over, smaller and faster, known for casting a gas that could blind anyone until cured.

And a black one…

Max frowned as he knew that one had to die first.

Like him, it had a small teleport feature. It vanished into a black portal and could cover up to thirty yards.

It's a shame you can't help yet. That would be another skill we could use, Bob.

The thread of their connection was stronger, and a part of him wondered what had changed. All he knew was Bob had spoken for the first time in ages, and it had seemed distant, so far away. But the command had been clear, and he wasn't missing a single kill if he could help it.

Summoning an Ice Spear, he poured mana into it, preparing for what he knew would come.

Pulling his bow out, Max let the arrow go.

[Empowered Shot]

The black beetle cried out, vanishing into a black portal with a third of its body missing. Max sent his spell as it reappeared, watching it pierce and kill the creature.

[Consume is Locked]

Chuckling to himself, he began casting other spells as he raced back to his allies, knowing they didn't want to miss out on the fun.

***

Alfreda continued to hum a song as she inspected the items laid out on the stone tables.

"You five never fail to impress," she said, holding up some poison sack they had harvested. "The stuff you bring me would make any other Faction weak in the knees."

Fowl laughed and pulled out one of the first kills they had made, quietly setting it on the ground behind the older elven woman.

An eight-foot purple and red striped beetle rested against the stone floor and Max ignored the look Batrire gave the two of them as they waited.

A few seconds later, Alfreda screamed as she turned. She saw the corpse move slightly as their warrior gently bumped it.

"You… Fowl Hammerfall are going to one day kill me," she cried out, holding her hands to her chest and taking deep breaths. "Why, I–"

Max watched as Batrire immediately cast a healing spell on the Faction's collector of all harvested parts.

He had reached Alfreda as she fell to the ground, immediately knowing what had happened.

Without waiting, he pulled the gloves off her hands, a faint residue of the poison from the sack. Her slight miscalculation had caused her to touch her skin, transferring the active poison upon contact.

The other two women were there in seconds and after a brief moment of panic, they had Alfreda sitting in a chair, vomit covering the stone floor near her.

"I… I didn't mean to–" their warrior sputtered.

"You never mean to!" Batrire snapped as she glared at Fowl. "We warned you this wasn't a good idea!"

"It's my fault too," Max said, sharing the blame. "Neither of us considered this might happen."

"He is fine dear," Alfreda managed to get out before taking another sip of water. "I broke the rules, touching myself while handling objects."

"But it was–"

Shaking her head, the older elf cut off their healer.

"No… I should have known and do not take away something Fowl and I enjoy. Unlike so many, you five do more than drop off items and run. You tell me stories and share with me what you faced. I can almost pretend I'm in the tower with you all for a brief moment."

Max saw her eyes seem to light up as Alfreda looked up at the ceiling, a slight smile beginning to form.

"Every day, I see the impossible, and often I wonder what it must be like, risking your life and facing different monsters and beings. While I don't want to risk my life to see such things, you all are kind to me. Even Fowl with his jokes tells me I'm more than some old woman who just takes whatever junk you bring."

"You're not old," their warrior said.

Alfreda's laugh filled the room.

"You don't have to lie to me," she replied. "No, I'm old, which is why I do this job. I could retire but then what? Sit around in some house somewhere, reading books? Even if I wrote them, I'd be bored out of my mind in days, especially after witnessing all I have in my lifetime."
She shook her head and shrugged.

"So don't punish him for bringing me some excitement. Besides, I had items ready to use. You all just beat me to it. Still, I am grateful for your quick response."

A huff came from their healer as she scowled at their warrior.

“You realize all you’re going to do is egg him on?” Batrire asked. “I mean, who knows what he’ll try to do next to get a reaction out of you.”

Alfreda nodded and stood.

“Don’t worry, dear, I’ll be ready. Besides, if I do manage to die from it, Tom will finally win a bet against Everett.”

She stretched and moved to the corpse still where Fowl had left it.

“It really is a remarkable specimen. Other than the giant hole where its head should be.”

“Blame that on Tanila,” Fowl said.

Their healer rolled her eyes at their warrior.

“Yeah, blame me for doing my job.”

Alfreda laughed again as she stored the corpse. “This is what I love about you five: like siblings, lovers, and a family. Trust me, what you all have is rare. Always protect it.”

As she spoke, her smile was replaced with a serious expression, and a single finger wiggled at them all for a brief second. “Now then, let’s see what else you brought for me today.”

Max watched as Alfreda moved back to the table and began going through the last of the bags.

“She’s a bit crazy,” Tanila whispered. “Still… she is right.”

“Yes… yes she is,” he replied. “Must be an elf thing.”

Laughter came from their side of the room as Tanila elbowed him immediately.

Links

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[None]

[F7]26/497(1) Chapter 497 - Return of Dwarves on Ice

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-

starts-67/chapter/2400453/chapter-497-return-of-dwarves-on-ice;
[F7]26/497(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-07-02 13:04,=1 2025-07-01 23:42],
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[publish2025-07-01 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-01 16:00])Chapter 497 - Return of Dwarves on Ice - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 497 - Return of Dwarves on Ice

“Dwarves aren't meant for this!” Fowl shouted as he slid down the ice.

Max laughed as he watched his friend almost crash into another one of the columns that ran the length of the room from floor to ceiling.

“Fowl’s right!” Batrire exclaimed from his back. “Still, I can’t help but laugh at this.”

The other two women laughed as Fowl bounced along the floor. The caves they were in continued their descent, and he was their best tool right now as over a hundred small furballs gave chase.

“You better hurry!” Max cried out. “They’re gaining on you!”

Using his wind magic, he carried himself and the three women through the thirty-foot-tall cave, dodging the pillars and watching as every dozen feet or so, another two or three of the creatures that lived here stirred and chased after Fowl.

Each was the size of a dwarf’s head and had big eyes and a mouth full of metal teeth.

“Who creates creatures like that?” Cordellia asked as she sent an arrow at a straggler behind them. “I mean… they are so cute.”

“And almost tore your arm off,” Batrire replied. “Rule number 742: Never pick up anything cute in the tower.”

Max couldn’t help but grin as he kept pace with their dwarven warrior.

Part of him felt guilty for sending Fowl skidding down the ice, while the other part was impressed with how well he had managed to stay on his stomach. His shield easily took out both creatures and ice columns.

Tanila and he were careful as was Cordellia, only using stone magic to create tiny spears that skewered the little balls of fur behind the growing horde of fluff that raced along the ice after Fowl.

“There has to be almost four hundred,” Tanila said as the slope began to lessen and a flat area up ahead appeared.

“Uh, guys! I see something!”

Fowl’s voice sounded a bit nervous or perhaps he would puke again, but Max darted ahead, finding the area opened up into a giant cavern.

In the middle of it was a fifteen-foot version of the small creatures they had faced since entering the tower floor.

As Fowl slid into the area, it moved, rising on two legs, and a pair of skinny arms poked out from its fur.

“What in the gods is that?” Cordellia asked.

It roared, sending flecks of saliva and bits of flesh flying onto the ice floor, and Max groaned.

“Rides over!”

He flew to where Fowl was and grabbed their warrior by the back of his armor, ignoring the smell of vomit on his friend.

“I’m going to hurl again,” their warrior muttered.

“Not yet! Be ready to fight!”

An empowered boss arrow connected against the boss’s left eye, sending out a gush of fluid and blood. It howled, covering the injured area and appeared to be clawing the offending injury.

“Sending another!”

Their archer repeated the process, destroying both eyes on the oversized fur ball and staining it with green blood.

“Incoming!” Tanila shouted. “Fire nova in ten!”

Max spun slightly, still holding onto Fowl who groaned as he was flung around like a rag doll, turning to see the avalanche of fluff.

Each of them clattered and squeaked, their sounds almost cute, except for the bite that could pierce anything but Fowl’s armor.

Max began to cast his own Fire Nova, timing it to go off with Tanila’s as he zoomed near the front of the pack, watching as their spells rolled out from the two of them.

A heavenly scent of burnt meat came quickly, overpowering the stench of burnt hair.

“Five seconds!” their mage called out.

They repeated the process, burning down the multitude of creatures until only the larger one remained. It moved around the two-hundred-yard cavern, crawling along the floor.

“Uh… put me down?” Fowl asked. “I really need to vomit.”

Without waiting any longer, he summoned a wall of stone and ice and dropped his friend upon it. Then, he took a moment to undo the harness, setting the trio of women onto the stone wall.

“I’ll deal with this one. You just keep an eye out,” Max said as he moved toward the injured creature.

“At least there isn’t a pink one this time,” Fowl said as he moved away.

His blade carved the creature up into bits and a Fire Nova ended its life without any real problem.

Flicking off the green blood onto the ice, Max stared at the cavern, wondering what would come next like the other four times.

“MAAXXX!”

Their healer’s shout wasn’t needed but he moved toward them quickly, noticing the dome roof of ice starting to fall apart, chunks of death now falling toward the floor.

“Shields and walls!” Max shouted as he stood between Tanila and Cordellia, a shield in each hand covering the pair and himself.

Fowl mimicked his stance, holding a shield above him and Batrire.

He and Tanila sent stone spears at the chunks that fell upon them, causing them to break apart and bounce harmlessly off their defenses.

In less than twenty seconds, the floor was littered with boulder-sized chunks of ice, replacing the smooth surface with a jagged one.

“There it is!” their ranger called, pointing at the creature now falling from the ceiling.

“You had to jinx it!” Batrire exclaimed. “Fowl Hammerfall, I swear I’m going to hurt you!”

“It’s not my fault!” their warrior shouted as he jumped off the stone wall and onto the textured floor. “We both knew something was coming!”

Max didn’t get involved, storing his gorgon shield and pulling free his weapon as the forty-foot pink ball of fluff landed on the floor, sending a shockwave out from it.

“I’ll get agro!” he yelled as the creature turned. Its black eyes locked upon the party, and its gigantic mouth opened up and roared at them.

[Intimidation Resisted]

Smiling to himself, Max sent a flaming spear at the creature, knowing it wouldn’t do much damage, needing to get its attention for now.

At least Fowl doesn’t freeze up anymore.

The spell did nothing, striking the pink fur and barely leaving a singed mark as Max flew near its face.

Both clawed hands came at him, and he easily dodged as he weaved through the attacks, using his smaller size to get close and jab his weapon into the creature.

[Power Strike]

He had transformed it into a gutting hook, driving the sharp tip into the thick hide and then angling the weapon where the long shaft was at his hip.

Like a farmer working in a field, he raced across the surface of the boss, his weapon slicing open the beast as he dashed around it.

Over and over he went in a circle, cutting an *X* around its front and back.

Torrents of green blood flowed, staining its pink skin as the creature attempted to swat at him with both hands, unable to do anything as he skinned it alive.

“NOW!”

With his weapon having done what he wanted, Max flew away, the giant, blood-soaked ball of fur facing him and turning its back to the party.

An enormous stone spear struck where he had made the *X* and it sank deep into the beast.

It howled, staggering from the strike that evaded its thick hide.

Max immediately used his Stone Mastery skill, forcing the spear deeper into its body.

It would have been comical to watch if they had not been facing a creature capable of sending Fowl flying across the entire cavern with a single strike.

The first one they had faced had wrecked them as they attempted to pierce its hide.

Now, it was over before it started, and Max sighed. The only cold sensation he received was his mana being refilled as the beast fell dead on the floor.

“That was too easy,” Fowl muttered at his return. “I mean, you sliced it open like an orange.”

“Hey, it was your idea, so take credit for it.”

A smug grin covered their warrior's lips as he puffed out his chest. “You’re right, I should get credit for it.”

Groans came from Cordellia and Batrire as they climbed down from the air wall they were still on.

“Thank the gods, a portal,” Tanila said as she pointed at the one that had just appeared in the cavern's center near the corpse. “I was growing tired of this.”

Smiling, Max moved to where she was and helped her down.

“You did great with that spear. You probably almost killed it yourself.”

“Sure… lie to me. I’m okay with that,” she replied with a wink. “Stil,l you owe me ten gold.”

“I’m not sure he threw up four times,” Max replied, ignoring the finger being wagged at the two of them. “I only counted three.”

“It was four, I kept count!” Cordellia chimed in. “Pay the lady.”

Laughing, Max started counting gold coins into Tanila’s outstretched hand.

“You do realize you’re all a bunch of bastards,” Fowl muttered as he pulled his beard out from between his chest and armor. “Nothing funny about a dwarf sliding across ice.”

His comment only made them laugh harder as they crossed the tower floor, ready to move on to the 78th floor.

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“What in the world are these things?” Cordellia asked as Alfreda held one of the furballs in her hands, inspecting it from all sides.

“Never seen one, but they sure are cute!” the older elf exclaimed. “I can see that its bite would indeed be painful. Look here and you’ll notice the serrated side that works like a saw. Sharp and deadly.”

“Uh, I’ll pass. Almost lost my arm to one,” their ranger replied.

Everett shook his head at the pile of corpses they had collected until they realized no one needed over two hundred of them.

“And you say there were larger ones?”

“The pink ones were forty feet tall,” Max said as he pointed at the stone table. “That’s the hide over there that I stored after we defeated the first one. Surely that should be useful for something.”

“Oh, I’m certain Alfreda will find a use for everything here. If we’re not careful, she’ll sell some of these to a food merchant and soon we’ll have on our hands another hit. All courtesy of your party and the reagents your team keeps bringing back.”

Tom yelped as he shook his left hand, waving it in the air as the tip bled.

“Uh, I told you those were sharp,” Fowl stated. “I mean why would you do that?”

“I was just testing the surface and the tip,” the trainer replied. “This claw is a lot denser than most of the others we’ve seen, and it has a sharpness not often seen on one this size.”

Max watched as Tom held the four-foot claw out to Everet,t who shook his head.

“No thanks. I’m smart enough not to test that out after seeing what it did to you.”

“Men,” Batrire grunted as she healed their trainer. “Can’t help but touch everything.”

“And you're certain they’re not useful for weapons?”

Max shook his head at Everett. “My weapon skill doesn’t give me a single idea on something it could create from them. Everything I’ve considered comes up blank, as the material will snap and can’t be forged. Using it as a handle or anything else is also worthless. There’s no magic in it.

“No magic,” the Faction leader whispered as he tapped his chin. “What kind of place would have something that big and as strong as this without any magic?”

“I think that’s the point,” Tanila said as she shifted the pink pelt on the stone table. “Watch.”

She summoned a gout of fire that continually shot outward, striking the hide and beyond the scent of some burnt hair, but it didn’t affect it.

“The only spell that worked against it was my stone one, after Max had created an opening. Part of me thinks these were designed to stop magic. Imagine a creature that couldn’t be pierced except by weapons. We all know they’re out there, but to see one this size… It’s a tad frightening.”

Max nodded as he pulled out his weapon, shaping it like a gutting hook and then withdrew a piece of hide he had kept for himself. Holding the curved edge up to it, he prepared to demonstrate how easily it sliced open.

“But a normal weapon –”

“That’s not a normal weapon,” Tom stated, cutting him off.

“True… then use your sword and see what happens.

Without waiting, their trainer had the weapon he had created, quickly cutting through the exposed hide. Tom used two other swords before the fourth cut the hide.

“So it has to be at least rare quality… that’s good to know,” Everett said as he watched the demonstration.

“You all done messing with my materials?” Afreda asked as she began storing the corpses laid out on the tables. “If so, some of us have work to do and can’t be caught playing in the tower.”

Both older men chuckled and began to move toward the door.

“Please, we all know you’d go if you could.”

“Aye, I would, but someone didn’t ask me.”

Seeing how her eyes fell upon him, Max almost groaned as Tanila laughed.

“Busted!”

Links

//[2025-07-02 13:53]

[None]

[F7]27/498(1) Chapter 498 – Max and a Troll

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-02 16:00 [2025-07-02 13:54] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2403147/chapter-498-max-and-a-troll; [F7]27/498(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-02 16:03],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-02 16:03],[Wayback_first2025-07-02 16:03],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-02 16:02],[this.word2025-07-02 16:04],[publish2025-07-02 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-02 16:00])Chapter 498 – Max and a Troll - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 498 – Max and a Troll

“You’ve been staring at those for a while. Are you expecting something special to happen?”

Shaking his head, Max gave Tanila a playful scowl before returning his attention to the materials laid out on the workbench.

All the various crafting items he had acquired so far were laid out in order next to the dragon’s tooth he had been given. Inside him was a sensation that he was close. Max could almost envision the weapon it would create in his mind. He wasn’t ready yet to start sketching on the paper he had purchased from Buwingrid, knowing it would only get one chance.

He was still afraid to even sketch it on normal paper, knowing that doing so might permanently force him in a direction that might change.

“I’m close… real close. I just need a few more materials and then I think I can do what needs to be done. Part of me wishes Buwingrid were accessible. I would almost return to that world with the gnomes, dwarves, and goblins. Perhaps there I could find–”

“No.”

Tanila’s tone was stern and while she didn’t shout, it carried a weight that stopped him immediately.

“We’re not going to start traveling to different worlds again. The last few times have been… dangerous. Unless there is no other option, we don’t need to risk such a thing.”

Sighing, Max nodded.

“I yield… no more traveling to other worlds for now.”

He could sense her shifting in the padded chair he had brought her. Their child was moving and her hand was pressed against her side.

“Does it hurt?”

“Hurt? No. Is it unkind to my insides? Yes.”

Grinning, Max held up his hands in surrender.

“I’m going to stop asking questions before I get myself in trouble.”

Tanila said nothing, watching him for another second or two before returning to the book in her hand.

Tapping his chin, Max mentally noted what else he thought he needed and decided not to repeat that comment again.

I really wish you were here, Bob. I could use your help with the crafting and what not to say to Tanila.

Unable to help himself, Max began to chuckle, ignoring the glance he got from the only other person in the room.

***

Max nodded at the guard who stood there, his mouth still open.

Selecting the 55th floor, he moved in first, leaving Everett, Tom, Dexic and Batrire to deal with the questions that continued to come.

As his eyes started to work, he saw the boss' floor he could already smell before him and started to chuckle.

“I’m not sure I like the–” Everett stopped talking, his eyes now spotting what had made Max laugh. “A swamp? For a boss floor?”

“Which most likely means something nasty,” Max replied. “That’s why I brought Batrire. You four will stay here and wait for me to find the boss and clear a path. We don’t need to have any mistakes.”

He leveled his gaze upon the four.

“If anything comes while I’m not here, you leave. Don’t wait, don’t even try to fight it. Understood?”

“You sure you don’t want me to kill it for them?” Batrire asked as she pulled a chair from storage and sat down.

“Is that… one of the faction chairs?” Tom asked.

“Maybe, maybe not. Surely there are lots of chairs out in the city that look alike.”

“It has two axes carved into the arms,” their trainer stated.

Without missing a beat, Batrire smiled and shrugged. “Perhaps I got a deal because they had leftovers.”

Dexic started to laugh and a moment later ,a matching chair appeared in her hands.

“Both of you?! No wonder they are always missing!”

Max took a deep breath and let it out as the four started to discuss the cause of the missing Faction chairs.

As they debated it, he pulled out his weapon. “Remember, stay put, don’t fight.”

“Sure thing, Dad,” Dexic said as she mimicked Batrire, pulling out a book and pretending to read.

Praying the four didn’t act stupid, he took off, scouting the tepid water and looking for what needed to be killed.

***

“That is one ugly boss,” Dexic proclaimed as she looked down upon the thirty-foot-tall oversized troll. “I mean… It’s a troll… but it’s not.”

“Way too fat and thick,” Tom said. “A female one?”

The sound of a golden plate glove striking their trainer’s helmet made Max laugh, and Batrire and Everett soon joined in.

“And that’s why he’s single…” the golden warrior stated. “Now then, we’re safe up here? This thing isn’t going to suddenly vanish?”

“Hopefully not,” Max replied as he winked at her. “Besides, it's only seventy feet in the air. Surely you won’t die.”

“But it would hurt like hell.”

Nodding, he waved at the four of them and flew toward the boss.

It was uglier than most trolls he had seen, and the fact that it was fatter and had flesh hanging in spots it didn’t usually hang made him wonder if Tom was right for a moment.

Two large clubs with pieces of metal were held in both hands and the clearing it stood in was filled with water to its shins.

A horrible place to fight for a normal person. Easily over Fowl’s head.

Charging the boss, he flew at its head, ignoring its short-lived roar as his weapon severed its head in a single attack.

[Power Strike]

[Rampage]

Without missing a beat, he caught the falling body part and quickly stored it, wondering how Alfreda would react upon having it set before her.

[Consume is Locked]

Max froze in mid-air. The reminder that his friend had been missing for so long suddenly caused his chest to ache a little bit.

Bob… I really need to figure out how to help you.

A few seconds passed as Max blinked, wiping his face with the back of his hand.

When everyone on his team was present, he could get past it, now here, it felt almost hollow.

Knowing his air wall wouldn't last forever, he quickly flew to where the four were waiting, let them enter his dimensional space and descended to where a chest had appeared on a very small section of land only ankle deep in all the water.

"That looked impressive," Dexic said as she moved to the chest. "I couldn't even follow your weapon, it moved so fast. One moment the troll had a head and the next it didn't."

"Just another reminder that you don't want to duel him again?" Tom teased.

"Only if you go first."

"May I?" Batrire asked, motioning at the chest.

With a nod, Max watched as his friend opened the wooden container. The green and brown surface bore the image of a troll like the one he faced.

"Oh Fowl's going to be pissed," Batrire said as she held up a milky white potion.

"Is that what I think it is?" Max asked, looking inside and seeing that there was one for him as well.

"Yup! Shame those three just get items."

The trio laughed as they watched the pair hold their potions before reaching in and pulling out new items.

"I… this…"

Dexic's mouth moved but only babbling came out as she held the chest piece that looked as ugly as a pile of troll shite. Based on how the warrior was acting, Max knew there had to be something special about it.

"These bracers," Everett whispered. "Impossible."

"My boots… 10% to all stats," Tom said quietly. "You two?"

The pair nodded and each of them began to smile, quickly swapping out the equipment they currently had on and for their new ones.

"Holy elf balls, that feels amazing," Dexic said.

Max cocked an eyebrow at the warrior.

"Elf balls?"

"What? Can't a girl enjoy a nice pair?"

Everyone laughed as Max motioned to the two crystals in the chest.

"You can take those. Saves me the trouble of having to hand them to you later."

Everett grinned and collected the pair, motioning to the portal that appeared a dozen yards away. “So… how long till we can do the 59th floor boss?”

“OH, now you want me to hurry through the tower,” Max said, grinning the entire time. “What happened to slowing down and taking my time?”

“Bah, we all know you can have us there in no time. Why drag it out?” Tom asked.

Shaking his head from side to side, he pointed at the portal. “Well, I don’t have a ton of time, but if we hurry, I’m pretty sure we can easily finish the next tower floor.”

All three of the faction members darted toward it, leaving a laughing healer and Max in their wake.

***

Callie babbled as Max played with her, doing peekaboo repeatedly, causing the child to laugh and smile.

“You know I’ve never understood that game,” Tanila said. “I mean… I know babies aren’t smart but the way she looks when you cover your face. It’s like she really believes you’re gone.”

“Simple pleasures?”

She shrugged and tickled the chubby toes with a finger, smiling as his niece laughed again.

“You going to spend any time with me in the dungeons?” Stacy asked again. “It’s unfair that you haven’t helped me get easy loot.”

Rolling his eyes, Max glanced at his sister.

“Oh really? Tell me, how do your stats compare to everyone in your party?”

Grunting, she scoffed.

“That’s not fair.”

“Not fair? You’re easily twenty levels past them with the potions you have already drank, and with the other ones waiting to be used, you’re going to be a powerhouse compared to anyone else. Let’s also not talk about how you have nine skills.”

A little bit of red colored her cheeks and her gaze looked away from him for a moment.

“I know… It’s just… the group, it’s so slow.”

Tanila started to snicker and then it turned into a full-blown laugh.

“She has no idea, does she?”

Shaking his head, Max held Callie out to Tanila.

“No, but I guess I can at least spend an hour or two with her. See what improvement I might be able to make by teaching her how to fight.”

“Really?!” his sister squealed. “You’ll take me?!”

“Yes… Just know we’ll train, so I won’t be the one killing most things.”

His sister was on her feet in a moment, bouncing on the balls of them.

“Let’s go!”

Tanila took the laughing infant and shook her head.

“You two have fun. Auntie Tanila will stay here and take care of everything.”

***

“Focus! Block high and parry!”

Stacy grunted, her shield moving quickly to stop the incoming attack from the orc on her left while using her sword to stop the axe coming her way.

The sound of metal on metal echoed off the worked stone hallway, and Max nodded in satisfaction as he watched his sister continue to block the attacks.

“When?!”

“Not yet! Focus on defending and then you can take them down. See the patterns. There are still areas you can improve.”

Another minute passed before he was satisfied with how she handled the pair of orcs. After he whistled, she quickly cut them both down in seconds.

Panting, she sipped the water he held out to her.

“Why? Why make me do this dungeon?”

“Because it’s weak or because you’re strong?”

“Both… the experience sucks, even solo,” she replied, handing back his flask.

“One day you’ll face two, three, or perhaps six creatures. It took you way too long to see that these two attack the same way over and over. They’re not hard to fight and you outclass them a lot. If one of them does land a hit, outside of your face or a few gaps in your armor, it will do nothing. That’s why you will pull two groups next time and defend against them all.”

“Four?”

Max nodded and grinned.

“Show me you can handle four and I’ll take you to a real dungeon. Don’t and we’ll stay here until it’s time to go.”

He watched as his sister’s face became serious and she summoned her weapon and shield again.

“Deal!”

Links

//[2025-07-02 16:04]

[None]

[F7]28/499(1) Chapter 499 - Floor 78

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-03 16:00 [2025-07-02 16:19] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2405844/chapter-499-floor-78; [F7]28/499(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-03 19:16],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-03 19:16],[Wayback_first2025-07-03 19:16],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-03 19:16],[this.word2025-07-03 19:21],[publish2025-07-03 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-03 16:00])Chapter 499 - Floor 78 - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 499 - Floor 78

Fowl shook his head in disbelief at him.

“You do realize… that I’m now at a place no dwarf ever believes they can achieve?”

“So I take it the potion did what I hoped?” Max asked.

A snort came from his friend. “And then some. Gods! I’m now at a 258 strength! Two stats, Max! Two! I’m…”

He watched as a few tears formed and ran down his tan cheeks, vanishing into his brother's brown beard.

“It’s okay. You’re the warrior I always knew you’d be.”

Short arms wrapped around his chest as Fowl rushed him, barreling into him.

“Thank you,” Fowl whispered.

“Anytime, brother,” Max replied as he returned the hug.

Sniffles came from the other three in the room, and Max watched as everyone stayed silent. After a few seconds had passed, he gave Fowl three quick taps on the back, causing the dwarf to let go and laugh.

“Gods, I’m such a baby.”

“Well, don’t expect me to change or burp you,” Max stated as he waved a hand before his nose. “No one should ever have to endure that.”

Laughter came from both men as they stood there, slapping each other on the arm playfully.

“You two done bonding?” Batrire called out. “No one cried when I got above 250 in two stats.”

“Bah, that’s a lie!” their warrior cried out, wheeling around and wagging his finger at her. “You cried last night when–”

“FOWL HAMMERFALL!”

Her tone cut him off and Max, Tanila and Corellia all started to laugh as their healer’s cheeks turned red.

“I think on that note, we'd best be getting to the tower,” their ranger said as she pointed at the door. “No need to watch Fowl get his arse kicked by a woman.”

***

Everyone stood under the shade of the sand umbrella Max had created, holding hands above their eyes as they stared out over the dunes.

“It’s been what? Six hours?” Tanila asked.

“At least,” Max replied. “No monsters, no changes in the landscape or horizon. And the sun… it hasn’t moved like on all the other floors.”

Using a rag to wipe the sweat on his face, Fowl muttered under his breath. “I’m not sure what’s worse, us not finding anything or the fact we’ve been carried so far by you. Still, it beats walking.”

Glancing behind them, Max saw the trail they had created through the sand. The wind was blowing it away slowly, erasing the memory of their passing.

“Two or three miles on foot didn’t bring anything either,” Tanila said, coming to join him. “It truly is a barren place.”

“I could go higher and look for a better view from above, but you all would need to enter my dimensional storage. That would allow me to move faster without worrying about someone passing out from the thinner air.”

“One time!” Cordellia exclaimed. “I only did that once!”

Smiling, Max shrugged and opened his dimensional space, letting everyone climb inside.

“You okay?” Tanila asked as she stood at the entrance.

“I am… this floor just… feels weird. Tom and Everett mentioned before that there were long floors. Even Dagon had spoken about floors that stretched on for weeks or months. I can’t imagine traveling for so long and nothing ever happens.”

“You’re worried we’re going in the wrong way?”

Shaking his head, Max knew he was biting his lip, unable to hide his thoughts.

“It’s so much more than that. The sun hasn’t moved at all. Everything feels more like a lower tower floor or a dungeon floor, not what we’ve encountered lately. Could a real world have a sun that never moves? What would that do?”

“Create a place like this?”

He groaned and leaned forward, kissing her.

“What would I ever do without you?” Max asked.

“Kill everyone you see and be a rampaging, crazed maniac.” Her smirk was only ruined by the small wink Tanila gave, right before she reached out and cupped his cheek. “Now go, I’m going to relax in the chairs you left for us.”

***

The days turned into weeks, and as he sped across the sky, the vastness of everything and the never-ending sun that baked down upon him caused his emotions to bubble out.

Every moment felt like one back on Igarra’s world; the only difference now was he didn’t have Bob to talk with.

As the team stayed safe in his dimensional storage, Max pressed forward, streaking across the sky like a comet, his mind at war with the knowledge that the landscape never changed.

Occasionally, he yelled out, crying to no one but himself, the frustration of all this wearing him down.

Everett understood that it might be a while after they used the rings the first time. Two days ago, the Faction leader’s expression showed the first sign of concern.

He had been tempted to use an escape gem. Max was done with this mess and would wait a week or more before he was willing to try a different 78th floor. The only thing that prevented that was how rare they were and the knowledge that it might not change. Losing weeks' worth of traveling was not something he could endure.

Bob... I really need you!

That same statement ran through his mind constantly, and the lack of reply deepened the pain.

***

“We’ll walk with you for a while,” Fowl said. “And don’t complain this time.”

Sighing, Max nodded. “Thanks.”

“You don’t have to do this alone,” Cordellia chimed in. “We’re here. All of us can see how you look.”

“And it’s not a pretty sight,” Batrire said, winking at him.

Taking another deep breath and letting it out, Max shifted in the chair Fowl had given him. Closing his eyes, he turned his face toward the canopy he had created with the sand.

“I’m just… frustrated,” he admitted. “I’m itching for a fight, a change in landscape… something!”

Tanila smiled at him, squeezing his leg as she sat beside him. “We’ll get through. Trust me. A floor like this won’t break us. We’ve faced impossible enemies and horrible conditions. So what if there’s nothing but sand?”

“Definitely better than sliding face-first along a frozen sheet of ice,” Fowl said.

Laughing, Max felt some of his anxiety start to vanish; the comfort of his friends and the assurance they gave were the medicine he needed.

***

Max glanced at everyone who was gathered around him.

Each of them was shifting slightly, not from the heat of the sand but of the news Everett had just shared.

“What do we want to do?”

His question hung there as the knowledge an elven army was moving toward Peltagow had just ruined everyone's mood.

“Everett said there are three or four days till the army arrives,” Cordellia replied. “We could try and see if finding the exit is possible before using a stone.”

“But three weeks,” Batrire said slowly. “We’ve been here three weeks… to give up that much time.”

Max kept his eyes focused on Tanila as she bit her lip, causing him to be concerned she might draw blood from how it was changing colors.

“I’ll do whatever… darn sharp ears always–”

The sound of flesh hitting metal came as their healer smacked their warrior.

“Fowl Hammerfall! Don’t you use those words, or help me; I’ll wash your mouth out with soap!”

A grunt came from Fowl as he glared at her, ignoring the look their ranger was giving him.

“Stop it, please,” Tanila whispered. “We’re all tired and worn out. He only said that because of all… this.” Her hands motioned to the area of sand surrounding them. “We need not to fight each other, especially if we’re most likely going to end up fighting against an army.”

“But your father, the King… and your sister–”

“Are against me,” Tanila said, cutting off Cordellia. “With them at the head of the army, both queens must face the,m and we know there isn’t a path in which they will survive. I have no doubt every elven adventurer is being summoned to his side. They will have no choice but to obey him and fight.”

“Meaning the slaughter of innocents,” Max said quietly. His eyes shook with rage as his hand crushed the metal cup it had been holding. “Families like mine… Faction members… so many innocents.”

“So what do we do?” Batrire asked. “Whatever it is, we’ll need to be out of here in two days. The city will require our presence.”

“Surely they’re going to evacuate the civilians,” Fowl said. “At least they will be safe.”

“From what?” Max asked, shaking his head. “Where can they go to be safe from an army like that? Head across the land to the Great Waters? There aren’t enough boats to carry them all. And the problems that would arise on the road there would be almost as bad as those in the army. They can’t even head to a nearby city. It couldn’t hold them all, and the roads would overflow.”

Grumbling, Fowl stroked his beard.

“Two days,” Max said as he stood, storing the chair he had been using. “I’ll give everything I have. You four get inside. I’ll be fine. Either we find the exit or use a stone to leave.”

Everyone stood, storing their furniture and items, moving quickly to enter the dimensional space he had just summoned.

“You okay?” he asked as Tanila moved past him.

“No… but I always knew this day would come. It’s just like my family. Why would he pass up attacking if we’ve not been seen lately?”

“Yeah, but why would he risk an attack when we could show up any minute? I mean even if he believes he is weaker, why…”

His words failed him as Max realized something he hadn’t considered until this moment.

“What is it?” Tanila asked.

“I… I think there might be a mole in our Faction.”

Both of her golden eyes widened, and then she frowned so hard that her cheek muscles ruined her beautiful face.

“He… would do that. And if they knew we were stuck here, and with no update on our return, it would seem like a wise move. Still…”

Max pulled out a communication ring and tapped it three times, waiting for a reply.

Soon the image of Everett’s face hovered above his hand.

“Did you find the exit?!”

Hope was in the older man’s voice, and Max knew he was about to shatter it all.

“No… but Tanila and I spoke. We think you might have a mole problem.”

Everett’s eyes filled with shock. Next came a string of words Max knew would earn a mouthful of soap escaping their Faction leader’s mouth.

“That… makes sense,” he replied after taking a moment to compose himself. “I’ll get to work on–”

“Wait. Feed information that we’re possibly getting closer to finding an exit. See what happens. Then let us know.”

“It’s a good plan. Are you?”

“No,” Max replied. “We’re going to give it two days. After that, we’ll use a stone to leave. In the meantime, I’ll keep the ring close. Message me if you learn anything new.”

A grunt came from the Faction leader and Max knew that if Everett found the mole, it wouldn’t be pretty.

“I’m on it. Good luck and be safe.”

Without waiting for a reply, the head vanished and Max tapped his ring three more times to disable it.

“You’re going to go all out, I can see it written all over your face.”

Max looked at Tanila and nodded.

“There’s no point in holding back. Whatever happens, I need to do what I can to cover as much ground as possible. Bob and I discussed this next part as a possibility for moving faster. While I’ve never had a chance to test it, we’ll see if it works.”

He smiled as her hand brushed his cheek.

“I’d say have fun, but I can already see you’re excited to try.”

Nodding, he covered her hand with his and smiled.

“Oh, I’m definitely looking forward to finally trying it out.”

Links

//[2025-07-03 19:21]

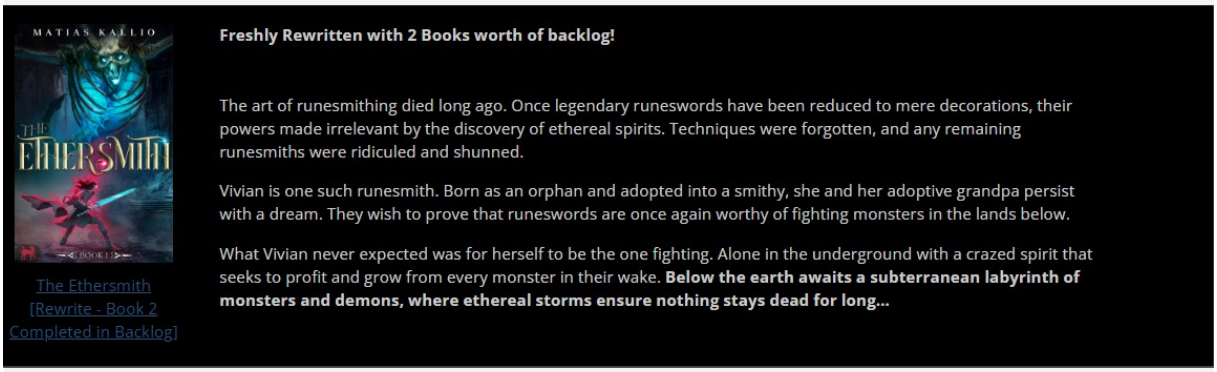
[None]

[F7]29/500(1) Chapter 500 - Not Holding Back

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-04 16:00 [2025-07-03 19:20]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2408519/chapter-500-not-holding-back;
[F7]29/500(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-04 17:08],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-04 17:08],[Wayback_first2025-07-04 17:08],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-04 17:08],[this.word2025-07-04 17:12],[publish2025-07-04 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-04 16:00])Chapter 500 - Not Holding Back - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*L1,L2*/


MATIAS KALLIO
THE ETHERSMITH
BOOK II
Freshly Rewritten with 2 Books worth of backlog!
The art of runesmithing died long ago. Once legendary runeswords have been reduced to mere decorations, their powers made irrelevant by the discovery of ethereal spirits. Techniques were forgotten, and any remaining runesmiths were ridiculed and shunned.
Vivian is one such runesmith. Born as an orphan and adopted into a smithy, she and her adoptive grandpa persist with a dream. They wish to prove that runeswords are once again worthy of fighting monsters in the lands below.
What Vivian never expected was for herself to be the one fighting. Alone in the underground with a crazed spirit that seeks to profit and grow from every monster in their wake. Below the earth awaits a subterranean labyrinth of monsters and demons, where ethereal storms ensure nothing stays dead for long...
The Ethersmith [Rewrite - Book 2 Completed in Backlog]

Chapter 500 - Not Holding Back

Hovering in the air, Max stared down at the landscape below him. Sand stretched everywhere as far as his eyes could see.

Even up here where the air was thin and only his constitution allowed him to function, the view looked almost curved.

Bob had mentioned this to him once when they had flown this high before. It was cold and he didn’t fault Cordellia for passing out the one time he took the party higher into the sky.

This ones for you old friend… soon… we need to free you.

Cracking his neck even though it didn’t matter, Max smiled and used his Wind Mastery to fly across the sky.

He pushed the very limits of his ability, doing everything he could to move as fast as possible.

When he knew there was no more to be eked out, he attempted what Bob had said.

With his Elemental Mastery, Max formed a spear of air shaped around his body.

Carefully, he grew it against the base of his feet. Two pads covered the whole area of his soles, a tiny tip forming between the section where his feet didn’t connect in the middle.

It wasn’t the normal spear he would attack with, but it still counted as one. That was all that mattered Bob had said. He knew what would happen next or believed it should work.

[Spell Burst]

Surging forward as if he had been standing still, Max felt the wind tearing against his face, the cold managing to sting just slightly. Both of his feet were fighting to shift under the force of his spear, but his feet clamped together around the tip he had created for this purpose.

He wanted to laugh, shout, or pump his arms, yet instead, he was flying outstretched, both hands above his head, making himself as flat as possible.

Max’s grin grew as he went for broke.

[Haste]

A sound erupted as he surged forward.

In the empty skies thunder rang out and Max felt the pressure of his movement fighting against him.

Beneath him the landscape moved like waves of an ocean.

It was a blur, even from up here.

Slowly, he lifted his head up slightly, keeping the position he and Bob had worked on a few times, tight. He felt the air hitting his hands before washing over the rest of him.

The horizon moved. It raced toward him.

He wanted to laugh.

More than anything, Max wanted to tell Bob that it had worked.

Soon old friend, soon!

With his eyes fixed on the edge of the sand, Max smiled.

Even if his skill couldn’t answer, he felt like Bob was with him.

***

His body ached from the position he held.

Not needing to sleep, eat, and drink as often as most allowed him to do the impossible.

To do this.

He saw it just a few hours before day two was done.

The line of sand that stretched on forever ended. A line of blue began to appear.

His heart felt light for the first time as he mimicked the combo from the first day. He wished he could use Haste again, but knew it was still on cooldown for more than a day.

[Spell Burst]

The spear sent him flying faster and the blue color began to grow and stretch, filling his vision as the line of tan sand met its end.

Max still had over an hour before he would probably reach the dividing line, but knowing it was there gave him hope.

***

“FINALLY!” Fowl shouted as he raced out of the dimensional space and splashed into the water. “No more sand!”

“We’re still on sand!” Cordellia called out as she joined him. “Just not as much!”

Both laughed as the other two exited the space they had been tucked away in for the last two days.

“Cutting it kind of close?” Batrire asked. “I mean… how much time do we have before we would have needed to leave?”

“Less than an hour,” Max replied, pulling Tanila close. “Once those two stop playing in the water, we’ll check out the building to the north.”

After kissing the love of his life, Max sighed.

“You okay?” she asked.

“Better now. From what I saw in the sky, there’s a building like that every so often. They looked alike, but I still put us down about a mile from one so we could make sure nothing surprised us.”

“Like endless water?”

Groaning, Max saw their healer frown at Tanila.

“Tanila Gilmenor, don’t make me–”

Batrire’s words were cut off as Fowl had snuck up behind her, dumping a barrel full of seawater on her.

Sputtering, she spun, wringing the water from her beard, and saw the guilty culprit running back into the ocean.

He stood there, holding Tanila as they watched the three play in the water, laughing and splashing.

“I’m guessing you don’t want to join them?”

Shaking her head, she pulled her golden braid over her shoulder.

“Nope… I don’t want to get this wet.”

***

Tan stones were formed together in a large square building about four stories high. A single door with runes that Max couldn’t read lined the outside.

“So I guess we just go in?” Fowl asked as they stood about a dozen yards away from the entrance.

“Don’t worry, I’ll go first,” Max stated as he moved forward, weapon and shield in hand.

Each step was exciting, and he was unsure what might happen, but the knowledge that they had finally found an end to all this sand made him rejoice.

Runes ran from the doorway, all along the floor.

As he drew closer, he could see inside, finding the building to be empty of anything but stone and a rune path leading to a portal.

No warning came from any of his skills as Max stepped onto the first rune, glad to see that it didn’t change at all, still shimmering the same white it had been before.

“The portal is in here!” he yelled at them. “Just stay behind me.”

All of them moved quickly to form up behind him, anxious to cover the thirty feet between them and the portal.

“It’s safe? Right?” Fowl asked as they got within the last ten feet.

“Only one way to find out. You can go first.”

Snorting, their warrior almost skipped as he moved, touching the shimmering blue portal and vanishing.

“Last one out–”

Cordellia’s words stopped as Max and the other two dashed forward, leaving her still standing there.

***

The moon barely peeked out from behind clouds, and yet every one of them breathed a sigh of relief.

“Finally,” Batrire said as she bent down and kissed the stone under her feet. “Solid ground.”

A guard moved to where Max and the others stood, surrounded by the lights that always illuminated the exit to the tower.

“Uh.. sirs and madams. I am informing you all that the tower is closed. There is–”

“An invading army,” Max said, cutting the man off.

“Yes… oh wait, it’s you!” Excitement filled the guard’s voice as he realized the ones before him. “We had heard rumors… but… the queens! They need to know!”

Max reached out and grabbed the guard who was about to turn and run off.

“Wait. Don’t. I need you to promise me you’ll tell no one.”

“But… the queens–”

“Will find out,” Max said as he motioned to the dimensional space he summoned. “I don’t want the elves to know we’re back so if you don’t mind.”

He watched as the young man’s face understood what he was being asked.

Snapping to attention, he nodded, saluting him before moving to where the other two guards were waiting.

“Gods, I’m beginning to think I need to set up my own room in that place,” Fowl muttered as he moved inside. “Spending more time in here than anywhere else.”

After they were all inside, Max stealthed and flew into the air, racing to the Faction property.

***

Opening the door to Everett’s office, Max smiled as both men turned, waiting to see who would enter uninvited.

Closing the door, he quickly unstealthed as a sword appeared in Tom’s hand.

“Dear gods! It’s you! For a second, I thought we were under attack.”

Both men moved forward and Max didn’t wait, summoning his dimensional space so his friends could exit.

“You all look horrible,” Tom said as he hugged Max. “Still, glad you made it home. Sorry you had to use a gem to leave.”

“Who says we used a gem?” Max replied with a wink. “We actually found the exit just an hour or so ago.”

“Really?!” Everett exclaimed as he drew close. “You managed to get out?”

Nodding, Max motioned to the couch.

“Can we sit? It’s been a crazy three weeks.”

Tom chuckled and nodded as everyone made their way to the soft furniture and plopped down upon it, ignoring the look the Faction leader gave for such an action.

“You do realize three weeks is normal at higher tower floors?” Tom asked.

“We do… but let’s just say that never fighting a single creature was… boring.”

“Those are hard ones, as often it can be tedious or boring, but still the chances of death are less. Still we’re glad you’re back. It turns out you were right about the other as well.”

Max saw Everett shift a little on his seat at Tom’s words.

“So you found the mole?”

“Found? No.. but somehow in the last day after spreading rumors about you all, two newer recruits… both elves have *‘vanished’* for no reason. With the tower being closed…”

“Then they were most likely spies,” Tanila said as Everett’s words trailed off. “Not an uncommon thing for sure. There still might be a few spies within the Faction but taking any action right now would require methods you might not want to employ.”

A nod came from both of the older men.

“We discussed that and would prefer not to go down that path,” Tom stated. “Part of the problem is we officially have no position about this war. Staying neutral is the objective of every Faction and yet… most of the members from a large majority of the other Factions have mentioned they will defend the walls.”

Tanila let out a small gasp and Max turned to see a smile starting to form.

“Is that good?” he asked. “I mean… I thought we weren’t supposed to be involved in these things.”

“Oh, it’s good for the city, bad for the invading army. While my father can easily defeat those who would attack him, he will have summoned a large portion of the guard and adventurers from Mylho Alora.”

Tom pulled out a roll of parchment and started to spread it over the table between the couches.

“Wait,” Max said as he grinned at Tanila. “Are you telling me your father has left his capital unprotected?”

“Well… I mean… yes, but you’d need to get past the walls and–” She covered her mouth and then laughed.

“Wait, what am I missing?” Fowl asked as he looked between them both.

“She just figured out what I’m going to do,” Max replied. “Tom, how long till the army reaches the city?”

“Based on our last intel… six… maybe seven hours?”

“Seriously?” Everett asked as he stood. “You’re going to leave here and do what?”

Max rose to his feet and stretched, moving to where the Faction leader was and put a hand on his shoulder.

“I’m going to remind Savantus that he’s not as smart as he thinks he is. Now then, if you all don’t mind, I’m going to suggest you use the bathroom, Fowl, and then be ready. I should return in a few with Rakonath and then we’ll head out.”

“Uh… about that,” Fowl said as he glanced at the three women who all groaned. “You… might want to not look inside your dimensional space. I… kind of had to go.”

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1]

Links

//[2025-07-04 17:12]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/the-ethersmith-rewrite-book-2-completed-in-backlog-aadaudqprxc.jpg?time=1751545985

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/123321/the-ethersmith-rewrite-book-2-completed-in-backlog

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[F7]30/501(1) Chapter 501 - Secret Plans

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-05 16:00 [2025-07-04 17:27] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2411219/chapter-501-secret-plans; [F7]30/501(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-05 17:26],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-05 17:26],[Wayback_first2025-07-05 17:26],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-05 17:26],[this.word2025-07-05 17:29],[publish2025-07-05 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-05 16:00])Chapter 501 - Secret Plans - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 501 - Secret Plans

Aerthen’s thrumming echoed through the cavern as she gazed upon Max, Rakonath, and the rest of the party.

“You realize that such an action will guarantee the king will come after you?”

Max nodded and shrugged.

“No matter what I do, her father will come for her and our child. They wouldn't be safe if I weren’t in the picture. Something feels off about the timing in all this, but a rare opportunity has been granted. I’ll ask again if you will join us in the coming battle.”

Slowly, the large-scaled head began to move up and down, and as it did, Rakonath began to trill.

“Do not think I will risk my life for anyone but you or him,” Aerthen said. “The life of your allies falls squarely upon your shoulders. When the time for battle comes, I shall engage from above and cause chaos but I will prefer to stay out of range. A king… a true king is not one to play with.”

Dagon’s words filled his mind as she spoke, reminding him that a king was given many things, and those gifts and abilities could change the course of a battle in moments.

“Any help you grant is appreciated,” Max replied. “Now then, are you willing to assist with the siege of Mylho Alora as well?”

Thrumming once more the red dragon began to shrink, transforming into her *smaller* humanoid version.

“What kind of dragon would I be to pass up raiding a capital?”

***

Tanila pointed to the section of the castle they would need to enter, and Max couldn’t help but smile as he gazed up at the city from above.

With dawn still four hours away they had the cover of night and flying from Athelia’s hideout to here had taken no time at all.

Tanila says we need to land over there. Where that garden and the spires are. Ask if she thinks there will be enough room for both of you.

You have no idea how horrible it is to relay messages between you two. Aerthen always has her idea of how things should go, yet I try to convince her to follow your plan.

So that’s a yes…

A silver eye stared at him as his dragon slowly nodded his head.

It is a good thing I have missed you or I would have gladly let you ride on her back.

That’s a lie and we both know it.

A small thrum came as Rakonath turned his attention back toward the castle.

“It looks incredible from up here!” Max shouted. “How far does the city go?”

“Dozens of miles,” Tanila replied. “You can see those lights off over there? They are the capital's official border, each stopping at a section of cleared lands before the trees are allowed to grow. I warned you there is only one safe spot for an army to come from, and it is on that main road.”

Nodding, he squeezed her a little tighter, feeling the growing bump of her belly and sensing their child kick slightly.

Knowing that Savantus had created a magical barrier of traps, spells, and other nasty surprises in the forest around his capital was a testament to the elf's power and planning.

She says no, but she will stay up here, letting me know if something comes and attacking anyone who bothers us.

Should I be concerned?

Those siege weapons are far enough away that we should be fine and if something comes, I have no doubt you can use a spell to stop it. She hasn't detected any magical defenses that might be present and Tanila said there weren't any she knew of.

Which is silly when you know there are dragons...

But we are also not foolish enough to anger a kingdom… Aerthen… she is siding with you. However this goes, let it be known that the only reason why she has come is because she feels obligated to repay what you did for her. No matter what you say, she will insist it is there and take care of it.

Grumbling to himself, Max hated that the dragon felt that way but was also grateful for any help she might give in the coming days.

That's fine. Tell her thank you again, and we'll hurry. I don't want to waste too much time. I've got a meeting to attend back in Peltagow.

Rakonath thrummed and Max scratched a scale near where he sat, realizing how much he missed touching his dragon.

"Once we're inside, it's all you!"

Tanila nodded and squeezed his hand on her hip.

***

Shouts came as they moved along the edge of the garden. A pair of elves were dead on the grassy section, struck down by their princess when Tanila realized they could resist her orders.

"They're weak!" she shouted as she led them upstairs. "None of these are that far in the tower."

"You mean he pulled all the elite guards?" Cordellia yelled from the back. "Why?!"

Max waited for an answer that never came.

Like her shadow, he moved barely a step behind Tanila, ready for anything that might come as she led them through hallways.

Ornate pictures, carvings, metal sculptures, and more lined the walls, yet the wooden roots along the top of the white stones were the most beautiful.

Each one looked like a living picture, somehow forming shapes and scenes.

I’m guessing they have or had someone with a skill like mine.

Seeing what could be done with his Wood Mastery ability beyond just making weapons or attacking someone gave him hope that one day he might be thought of as more than just a warrior.

“Left!”

Everyone followed in step as their boots announced their movement.

“Intruders!”

Four guards approached them, each with a red sash over their left arm.

Two raised bows while the others came at them with swords and shields.

He wanted to say that he solely acted out of care and love but the truth was, Max needed to satisfy an urge he felt.

Gone were the beautiful root carvings and scenes as he used his magic to tear them from the stone walls, stretching and reaching out until they dug into the flesh of the elf’s faces and necks.

Tanila was right; what would have simply been a hindrance for most killed the four in a second.

She missed a step, and he saw her slightly turn her head to look at him.

“Don’t wait, we need to go,” Max said as the cold power rushed through him.

[Consume is Locked]

One notification came, and he wondered why or how a guard might have something he could use.

As they strode past the first pair, he frowned, gazing upon them and noticing their build. The armor didn’t fit right, and when they reached the ones with bows, he grabbed onto Tanila’s robes, stopping her.

“Wait! Something’s wrong.”

She looked at him and frowned.

“What do you mean?”

“Look at them. Their hands. How many archers or guards do you know who have burn marks like that on the top of them?

Bending down, Tanila looked over the dead bodies, inspecting the hands and then slowly reaching out to touch the red sash on their arms.

She screamed as she touched it and yanked her hand back, her entire arm twitching violently.

“Batr–”

“On it!” their healer called out as she caused a glow to surround their mage.

“What is it?” Max asked.

“These… are normal workers… from the palace. No one special but with jobs that are… common. And those sashes are warded. I think…” She frowned and turned to look at him. “I think he might have thought we’d attempt to come here.”

“So a trap is set?”

Chewing on her lip she nodded slowly.

“What kind… that’s the real question. I mean… he has access to more spells than I can imagine. If he’s done this then…”

Standing, Tanila pointed at the door.

“Do me a favor and see if you can detect anything on it.”

“Like a trap?

“Exactly like a trap,” she replied.

Motioning for everyone to back up a little bit, he took a deep breath and summoned an air wall before them.

Slowly he moved to where the door was, trying to sense anything that might be off. His trap detection skill didn’t reveal anything.

Holding his hand out until it was a few inches from the wood, he waited, closing his eyes and trying to focus on anything that felt off.

“I’ve got nothing, “ Max said after about ten seconds. “No traps, nothing.”

“Back up then, we’ll do this my way.”

He could feel his face scrunching, but he didn’t argue. He moved to stand beside her as she formed a stone spear and sent it crashing through the door.

As the wood ripped from the hinges, a blast of fire ripped through the doorway.

Two stone and ice walls rose as Max and Tanila summoned them, fighting against the flames that raced down the hallway toward them.

His wind magic rushed at the incoming flames and Max used his Stone Mastery to pull free the walls and form a barrier.

Heat washed over them all as he stood before them, shield out.

A boulder slammed into the doorway and cut off the inferno, leaving jets of fire that still shot out from the edges and cracks that weren’t sealed.

Thirty seconds later the flames ended, and Max slowly relaxed, sensing whatever power had been there was gone.

“What in the gods was that?” Fowl asked. “Did the damn king booby trap his own home?”

“It appears so,” Tanila replied as she dismissed the boulder. “I guess he is smarter than we gave him credit for.”

“Uh… we got incoming,” Cordellia said as the sound of metal boots on stone came from behind.

Turning his attention to the hallway behind them, Max saw six guards appear, all wearing red armor.

“Princess… I mean Tanila… are those the real ones?”

Max could tell these new opponents differed from those they had seen so far. They moved with a grace that spoke of battle.

“They are.. Yes…”

“Fowl, keep them safe,” Max said as he moved to face the six.

“You’re not going to fight them all are you?” their warrior asked.

“I am… I… I think Bob needs me to.”

His sonar told him every one of his friends looked at him after he had spoken.

“Bob? Needs you to kill… elves?” Batrire asked.

“Not just elves… something other than creatures… I’ll tell you later but for now, let me handle this. Please.”

“Go,” Tanila said as she stood at the back of the line, her gold hair and eyes glowing as she considered the trap her father had left most likely for her.

Without waiting another moment, Max sprang forward, his weapon transforming into a double-bladed staff.

Like a thresher in the field, he moved through the hallway, the six of them forming up, shields and weapons prepared to defend, but unprepared for what he did next.

Wind came from behind, pushing the group forward. Stone rose from the floor, catching their feet and driving shields upward.

It seemed like a good place to fight in a hallway wide enough for four people to walk side by side and tall enough for Aerthen to be in her humanoid form.

Unfortunately for them, Max wasn’t going to fight fair. He just needed to kill them.

The first fell, their shield out of position, his blade cutting through their neck.

As the one beside them tried to recover from both the speed of his attack and the sudden change in landscape, Max kicked them, sending them flying backward and into an ally.

He laughed as the first wave of cold hit him.

Inside was a thread and it began to pulse.

The craving he had felt roared inside him.

It yearned for an escape.

And these elves had provided him with the opportunity to satisfy that craving.

Like a thirsty man, Max drank deep from the well of life.

Slaughtering them all like sheep.

Links

//[2025-07-05 17:29]

[L1] None

[F7]31/502(1) Chapter 502 - Traps

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-06 16:00 [2025-07-05 17:26] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2413526/chapter-502-traps; [F7]31/502(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-06 16:41],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-06 16:41],[Wayback_first2025-07-06 16:41],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-06 16:41],[this.word2025-07-06 16:45],[publish2025-07-06 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-06 16:00])Chapter 502 - Traps - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 502 - Traps

The sound of his own laughter didn’t seem right, yet Max couldn’t stop himself from filling the hallway with it.

“MAX!”

Tanila’s shout came again, and he winced.

All he wanted to do was be free.

To fly into the sky and soar.

Each death caused by his blade felt like the heavens called for him to join them.

The joy he was experiencing right now was fighting against a chain that bound him to the ground.

“REMEMBER OUR CHILD!”

Max felt his mind jerk back to the moment as if a boulder had just crushed him.

Blood dripped from the tip of his double-bladed staff. Parts of the elven guards he had fought were scattered along the hallway.

A head lay wedged against a body, empty eyes staring at him.

Inside his chest, the thread pulsed repeatedly. Like an infant in its mother's womb, it longed for what he had just given it.

Max could feel it begging for more.

“You okay, bud?”

Turning slowly, he saw the look on Fowl’s face. Tight lips, drawn together and narrowed brows. His shield was still up slightly, no weapon present.

“I’m… fine. The… skill… called out to me in a way I haven’t felt in so long,” Max said, looking at the others for a moment. “I know it sounds weird, but Bob *needs* me to do this.”

“There’s a way to fight and then there is what you just did,” his friend stated. “That wasn’t a battle… You toyed with them.”

Swallowing hard, he could see the slight movement of the others, their heads all bobbing in agreement with their warrior's words.

Max felt a twinge of guilt, not doubt that what lay beneath him matched what he had seen when Bob had been given free rein.

“You’re right. Whatever it was it came at me and for a moment it was glorious. I… I yearned to be free.”

“I’ve been there,” Tanila said as she moved to where he stood, putting a hand on his forearm. “You helped me overcome my desires. Listen to us. This isn’t the way to help Bob.”

Max could see the look on her face. The pain of what she had witnessed couldn’t have been portrayed any better by a master painter. Her bottom lip was pulled in, and those beautiful gold eyes trembled slightly.

Cordellia drew close and Max felt her presence as she stood next to him. “We’re all here. Don’t forget that.”

Taking a deep breath he held it for a few seconds before letting it rush out.

“So… what do we do? Change our plan?”

Tanila shook her head slowly.

“No. We’ve come this far and now that we know traps will most likely be everywhere, we’ll need to be careful. I have no doubt my father believes what he has set will be enough to stop us. He is wrong.”

Max watched as her concerned expression changed to one of stone. In that moment her resolve to end this had returned and he knew he needed to find a way to match it.

“Then lead the way,” Max replied. “I’ll be fine. I promise.”

***

Dozens of elves lined the hallway that led to the throne room and Max fought against the desire to overwhelm him. Like a raging river, now filled with a torrent of storms that never ended, his lust for what was taking place threatened once more to overrun the banks.

The thread connecting him to Bob was pulsing rapidly, and it felt like it had swelled in size, unable to handle any more power before it might burst.

“That’s… that’s the door, right?” Max asked, his voice trembling slightly.

“It is,” Tanila replied, her hand squeezing his arm. “Don’t forget it should be trapped.”

Nodding, Max took a deep breath and summoned walls again. “I’m ready when you are.”

Together, they protected their party and sent large stone spears that filled the twenty-foot-wide area at the doors, which rose floor to ceiling.

Fowl stood before Batrire and Cordellia, his two shields protecting them if spells came at them, as they had the last few times. Max did the same for himself and Tanila.

Large wooden doors with intricate designs groaned against the spells, runes illuminating as stone spears shattered against them.

“Again,” their mage said.

It took three more spells before one of the doors was partially ripped off the wall, causing an explosion to rock the entry area. The two columns nearest the doors collapsed as three different kinds of magic erupted around them.

Max’s Stone Mastery took control of every rock it could, only able to use the ones knocked loose from the blast as whatever enchantment had been on them before was broken.

Even with the magical walls they had created and the barrier he formed with the new materials, magical energy still reached them, causing pain and debuffs to appear.

[Weakness Resisted]

[Disease Resisted]

[Cursed - 2x cost to all spells]

Words that would get a dwarven mouth washed out came from their healer as she began healing and attempting to rid everyone of the afflictions the trap had given them.

“What in the gods was that?” Batrire asked. “I have four debuffs!”

Tanila winced, and Max saw that she looked ready to throw up. “It’s… not one I know but…”

Her words were barely out of her mouth before she turned green and started to retch.

Cordellia made it only a few seconds more before she too matched their mage.

“Goblin nuts and…” Batrire muttered as she cast spells, different shades of magical auras appearing on both elves as she went through the variety of spells she had. “Take a potion for the disease, I can’t cure it.”

Between the gagging, both elves struggled to hold a potion and managed to get it into their mouths and down, stopping the nonstop retching.

Groaning, their ranger wiped her mouth with her sleeve and spit. “That… was awful.”

“I think it was meant for us,” Tanila replied as she took a few breaths, holding her stomach with one hand. “The way it felt… he knew an elf would be here.”

“Seems like a bastard,” Fowl muttered. “Doing that to his own kin.”

“Trust me, that’s not the worst he’s ever done.”

Max waited, and once Batrire had managed to cleanse them all, he pointed at the room.

“I’ll go first. You four wait.”

No one complained as he moved forward through the rubble, sweeping aside the stones and wood scattered along the entry area.

Gone were the two doors that had once decorated the entrance; now, only a few pieces hang from the top hinge near the blackened ceiling.

His trap skill didn’t detect a thing, and the knowledge that there had to be some difference in the ones placed here and his ability to find them made him wonder what the king was able to do.

Is there a specific talent that allows for this? Tanila said that both spells and skills can create traps. Rakonath said Aerthon told him that hers are a combination of abilities that dragons possess. How many skills does Savantus have to do all this?

Knowing that the elf had access to red potions but also not knowing how many potential red skills someone could have bothered him. Only once had Bob mentioned that red skills didn’t work like clear ones. The power they possessed at the highest rank was why the kings rarely fought.

Looking in through the wrecked opening, Max saw the object of their visit and the carnage Savantus had unleashed.

Rage boiled up inside him as he saw the remains of bodies that had been destroyed by whatever spell had gone off.

The white stone was blackened, and large pocked sections were missing across the giant throne room floor.

Using his Wind Magic, Max flew to the metal throne that rested upon a pedestal and couldn’t help but grimace as he moved around it.

It looked like a tree was growing up, with minute details of bark, leaves, animals, and more.

Yet, engravings on the back of it, down near the base, made him want to destroy it right now.

The bodies of humans and dwarves were encircled by the roots, pain etched upon the faces of those who had been forever immortalized upon the throne.

Savantus is one sick elf…

Max let the rage he felt for the King of this kingdom grow and began reaching out with his Stone and Metal Mastery.

He could not find any weak points; each object was imbued with magical energy. He turned his weapon into a pickaxe, smiling at how he had learned it could become so many things.

White stone flew in every direction, pieces bouncing off of him and the throne as he carved out a section around the base.

The speed at which he worked made a constant booming sound, and for just a few moments, there was a two-foot-wide gap around the entire throne.

Grabbing the base of the metal seat which signified one thing, he yanked upward with all his might.

A crack rang out as the stone gave way, freeing the throne from its foundation.

Max knew it weighed more than most men could hope to lift, yet he could have easily played with it like a ball if there had been time.

Moving his hands to get a better grip, his glove touched the throne and a jolt of pain roared through his body.

[Regeneration]

Someone had called his voice as he dropped the throne, and the stone was still attached to it.

Every pore of his body was on fire, a burning sensation raging across his skin.

MAX!

Dropping to his knee, he felt his healing ability working overtime, trying to keep up with whatever was afflicting him as Rakonath called out his name again..

Seconds passed and out of the corner of his eye, he spotted Tanila and Batrire at the door of the throneroom. Holding a hand up, Max gritted his teeth, keeping his mouth shut lest he cry out from the pain.

I'm fine... I... will be fine...

Everything inside him was on fire and different from any he had ever felt. The worst part was Rakonath's sensation of concern through their bond.

A minute passed, and the pain slowly dissipated, and the ability to breathe returned.

Taking huge gulps of air, Max blinked multiple times, his vision quickly returning as his eyes had been destroyed under the spell.

What in the gods was that?!

It only took a few more seconds before he felt good as new, the improved regeneration ability curing what most couldn't imagine.

Standing he waved off the party still watching him.

I am fine... a trap...

For a moment... I was afraid that you...

But I wasn't. Don't worry, we'll be outside soon enough.

He reached out more cautiously, touching the throne once more, glad when nothing happened.

Not wanting to wait another minute, Max summoned his dimensional vault and grabbed onto the throne with one hand. He tossed it inside like a stick, flying back to where his friends were waiting.

"Are you okay?" Batrire asked when he got close. "Your hitpoints... for a moment, you were at twenty percent."

Shaking his head and realizing his eyes had widened, Max saw their expressions, concern for what had happened to him.

"If it had been any of us, it would have killed us instantly," Tanila said, her voice harder than usual. "He always said his throne was meant for no one but himself... I never imagined it would be trapped like that."

"Well, I'm glad it was me and none of you," Max replied. "I'm fine, though. For now we need to get back to the capital. We need to do a few more things before the sun rises over there and the battle begins."

Opening his vault again, he motioned to the three he knew who would take the trip home inside it. "Perhaps one of you wants to sit on it?"

Fowl shook his head and held up both hands.

"Before watching what I saw, I would have pissed on it... after seeing what happened to you, I think I'll not risk it."

Chuckling, he tapped his dwarven friend on the shoulder and motioned for them to go inside.

Links

//[2025-07-06 16:45]

[None]

[F7]32/502a(1) Chapter 502a - Show Them What You've Become

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-07 16:00 [2025-07-06 16:43] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2416060/chapter-502a-show-them-what-youve-become;[F7]32/502a(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-07 16:46],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-07 16:46],[Wayback_first2025-07-07 16:46],[Waybak_Last], [this.Fav2025-07-07 16:44],[this.word2025-07-07 16:49],[publish2025-07-07 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-07 16:00])Chapter 502a - Show Them What You've Become - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 502a - Show Them What You've Become

Bob’s whole body shook as he stood, hands pressed against the walls of his prison, ragged breaths coming every few seconds.

The thread that connected him to Max was filled with a sensation, a lust that he hadn’t felt in so long.

Bob had longed for it since the day that boy had let go, letting him take control to fight against the elves who had come to kill Max.

He had yearned for it.

Even now, the sensation was intoxicating.

“What are you doing over there?”

His words were meant for no one and yet Bob wondered if the ones who had imprisoned him were watching and listening.

Surely they can feel the shift in power.

The wall he was using for support felt weaker.

He still couldn’t do anything to it and knew it was pointless to waste the moment that might come.

Somewhere, on the other side, was a well of power waiting for him, begging for him to take it.

Moments passed and the lust for death decreased and Bob was able to stand, no longer needing to lean against something to stay upright.

It had jolted him from the meditation state he had waited in.

Like someone pouring ice-cold water upon a sleeping person, every part of his skin was in shock.

With a trembling finger, he stroked the thread that ran from his chest to Max.

Show them who you are.

Show them who we are.

A wicked smile grew as Bob moved back to the center of his prison, sitting once more on the floor and closing his eyes.

Let them see what you have become.

Links

//[2025-07-07 16:49]

[None]

[F7]33/503(1) Chapter 503 - Battle Plans

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-08 16:00 [2025-07-07 16:45] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2418697/chapter-503-battle-plans; [F7]33/503(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-08 16:47],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-08 16:47],[Wayback_first2025-07-08 16:47],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-08 16:45],[this.word2025-07-08 16:50],[publish2025-07-08 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-08 16:00])Chapter 503 - Battle Plans - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

[shoutout_link L1,L2,L3]

Chapter 503 - Battle Plans

Max couldn’t help but admire the woman who continued to stare at him.

Out of everyone in the room, General Kim was the only one who didn’t seem to think his plan was crazy.

“Adventurer Hoste… you realize this plan requires you to defeat an army by yourself.”

Nodding at the older woman, he didn’t avert his gaze from her grey eyes.

“General Kim, only a third of the army as I already mentioned. Anyone near me will be caught in the chaos of the battle and die to something none of them can withstand. You understand there isn’t any other option.”

Max pointed at the latest intel that they had received.

A large table with a lifelike model of the city and countryside was in the center of the massive room. Almost fifty people gathered, his party, Everett, and Dexic with him. Molly and Macy stood nearby, each queen having spoken only briefly at the start.

Four other Faction leaders had come, the rest choosing to remain *neutral*.

“They have split their army, and we know that Savantus is leading the troops north of the city. With his wife to the east and his other daughter to the west, this battle can only be fought one way.”

Having moved as he spoke, Max stood where pieces representing the Elven king and more than the expected 10,000 elvish soldiers were gathered.

“If your troops go out here, they would die regardless of if I was there or not,” he continued. “Besides, you know Savantus’s requirements for surrender.”

Everyone in the room went silent for a few seconds after those words.

“We will never hand him the throne,” Macy whispered. “For an–” She stopped talking, her eyes landing on Tanila who stood with the rest of his Faction, gold hair shining in the well-lit room. “For a Gilmenor to rule here would mean… Phaius would not be happy. Something akin to the records of what took place the last time a war was fought would spill out and I’m afraid every human would be wiped out.”

“If you were lucky,” Tanila replied. “Most likely, my sister would rule and what she would do to you all… would give grown men and women nightmares.”

When he realized both women were done talking, Max cleared his throat.

“Tanila and Dexic will take the army to the west. Fowl and Batrire will take the army to the east. Keep the bulk of the warriors behind them as far as possible and trust that the adventurers who are standing with you understand the weight of what we are doing.”

“Still… to know the Elven King has put his entire bloodline at risk…” General Kim said as she ran a hand through her silver hair, “Means there is only one option. Win or die.”

“Then we must win,” Fowl said as he stepped forward. “Each of us knows this man right here is willing to risk his life for everyone in this city. Now comes the moment we prove we are worthy of the title *hero* .”

“Wait, who said we’re heroes?” Cordellia teased, causing a few laughs to break the tense moment.

“I did,” their warrior replied. “Besides, we all know we’re out of time. We can keep standing here and talking about stuff that won't change or go out there and do what needs to be done.”

Batrire wrapped her arm around Fowls and smiled. “Spoken like a hero.”

Max let himself chuckle, then moved to General Kim and held out his hand.

She shook it and sighed.

“When Major Greyson told me about how much of a pain in the arse you are, I didn’t believe him. Go prove to Savantus just how big of one you can be.”

***

Slowly, Max pulled his lips away from Tanila’s, and both breathed heavily afterward.

“Be safe. Return to me,” he whispered.

“Don’t worry about me. I’ll be fine. Besides, Dexic has promised to take care of me,” she replied.

A grunt came from the golden warrior who was near them.

“Please, don’t bring me into this. We both know I’m nothing more than a bump in the road to the real problem,” Dexic stated. “Still, I’ll do whatever I must to keep her safe. She has a group of adventurers all dedicated to her.”

Max nodded and finally let go of Tanila.

“I know. Thank you again.”

A golden gauntlet waved off his words before pointing at the group of twelve adventurers from other factions, all waiting on them.

“It’s time. Not all of us are as fast as you,” Decix replied. “Besides… those clouds…”

Everyone looked up again at the clouds that had formed overnight.

Lightning occasionally crackled through them, and the sun they expected to shine was struggling to reveal itself from behind the curtain of darkness.

“Just means Tanila can summon lightning faster. Now go,” Max said as he turned to where Fowl, Batrire, and Cordellia were.

“Hey… don’t expect a kiss like that from me,” Fowl joked. “My lips can’t take anymore.”

Cordellia groaned and yet a small smile appeared.

“You sure you’re okay with this?” Max asked as he looked over the other adventurers who would support these three.

“Ockrim loves me,” their warrior replied. “He’s given me the skills I need, a woman who loves me and a brother so ugly no one else would claim him. Of course, I’m okay.”

Max embraced his friend without missing a beat, lifting the dwarven warrior off his feet before setting him back on the ground.

“Bah, I hate when you do that,” Fowl muttered. “Still… you going to be okay?”

“I am. Besides, you lucked out and got Aerthen. She’s anxious to help you.”

“Anxious to eat him,” Batrire said. “He’s right, though, Max. You heard what Tanila said… or what she could say.”

Nodding, he came and hugged his healer.

“I know… keep him alive. I need his horrible jokes.”

Batrire managed only a grunt before sniffing a few times and nodding.

When he turned to Cordellia, she had already moved, wrapping her arms around him.

“I got them,” she whispered. “No matter what, I’ll protect them both.”

Giving her a gentle squeeze, Max nodded and smiled as their ranger pulled back from the embrace.

“I don’t expect anything less. Just remember, Sylvandra won’t be an easy fight. Save your mana.”

The bow he had made her appeared in Cordellia’s hand.

“No worries. I’ve got a few charges saved up for her.”

“Then go. Be safe you three.”

Each gave a quick nod before turning and moving to the group waiting a dozen yards away.

“You’ve grown so much,” Everett said as he approached Max. “Gone is the young boy who stood in my office just a year ago. Now before me stands a man and a hero.”

“I’m not okay with that title,” Max replied, seeing the wet eyes his Faction leader had. “Besides, we both know I owe a lot to Tanila for making me who I am.”

Everett laughed and nodded.

“The right partner can make anyone a better person. Now then, tell me what you need.”

Letting out the breath he had held back, Max banished the smile he had been wearing for the last few minutes.

“My family, keep them safe. No matter what happens.”

“Already taken care of. Though your sister is as stubborn as you, they are already out of the city. They would be taken across the great waters if something were to happen. But tell me, Max… can you–”

“I don’t know,” he replied, cutting Everett off. “I won't hold back but if Dagon taught me one thing, it’s that a true King or Queen is different from anyone I’ve ever faced. As much as I’d love to go against Dagon again and see if I could win, there’s no time for that. Don’t worry, though. I won’t hold back.”

Slowly Everett nodded, his lips pressed tight against each other.

“Thank you again for getting all the items you did for my team,” Max said as he held out his hand. “And thank you for trusting me as you have.”

A sigh came from Everett as he grabbed Max’s hand and yanked it.

The action did nothing but propel the older man to where he stood, and letting out a laugh, Max gave him a quick one-arm hug before stepping back.

“Be safe, *Adventurer Seth Pendal…* ” Everett said with a wink.

“I will. Now then, if you’ll excuse me. I need to go pick a fight with the Elven King.”

Without waiting for a reply, Max leaped into the air and flew north from the center of town.

***

The reports were close. I see about ten thousand on my side and Aerthen says she sees about the same. Thank you for trusting me with Tanila.

We both know you’ll do whatever it takes to keep her safe. Besides, it’s time for you to make a name for yourself apart from me.

A small sensation of laughter came through their bond, and Max couldn’t help but smile. He knew that Rakonath didn’t care about that at all.

Yes, they shall soon sing songs about the silver dragon who saved the human capital from the evil elven empire. Perhaps you can do enough to earn a few lines in my story.

Smiling, Max hovered about a hundred yards above the city's outskirts, staring at the farms along the northern road. His eyes could detect movement far away as a large army trampled the crops growing beneath their feet.

I can sense some hesitation… Are you certain you will be fine?

Attempting to calm himself, Max struggled with the different desires that wanted to take over.

The bloodlust was back as the thought of so many to kill stood before him.

Never in his life had he imagined a reason he would ever need to end someone's life.

Adventuring had quickly taught him that moments would arise and require it.

So many memories of the elves who had tried to kill him flooded his mind, sharing space with the bandits that had attempted to strike him down while he relieved himself.

A smile grew as he remembered those moments.

The power he had gained from them had been monumental in his growth.

Each time it had stoked a fire inside him and made the fight against Bob's hunger harder to resist.

Yet staring out over the approaching army, Max couldn't help but wonder what might come from this moment.

How many lives must I end today? You know me… You know what I fear.

No reply came for a few moments and finally Rakonath replied.

I do know you, Max. You are the kindest and strongest individual I have ever met. Most wouldn't risk this moment, choosing instead to flee to the other kingdom or across the waters.

You choose to fight this battle for many reasons, the greatest one being that you cannot stand watching others suffer. While that reason has gotten you in trouble, no matter what happens today, I know you will return to Tanila. She and your child are the anchors that keep you grounded.

Taking a deep breath, Max slowly let it out.

I will have to find a way to repay your Father someday for allowing us to bond. No matter what happens, know that you are more to me than just some dragon. You are part of my family as well.

I know. Now then, it is time. A horn has sounded from the other side and these clouds are growing darker. Whatever is going to happen will start soon.

Glancing up at the growing storm above him, Max moved closer to the army that could be easily heard, whose steps echoed across the fields.

Horns were blowing and banners fluttered in the wind.

Emblazoned upon them was an image he had often wondered about.

A gold tree stood on some while the outline of golden drops of blood was on others.

With a good mile between them, Max's eyes searched to find the one he was looking for.

Like a beacon on a hill, the glowing hair stood out from the rest of the army.

Oh Bob how I wish you were here…

Max flew toward the army with that last thought, ready to deliver a message and pick a fight.

Links

//[2025-07-08 16:50]

[L1] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/123292/the-last-mage-king

[L2] https://i.imgur.com/zfGBSQc.gif

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/123292/the-last-mage-king/chapter/2405492/the-last-mage-king-coming-july-5th

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[F7]34/504(1) Chapter 504 - Making a Statement

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-09 16:00 [2025-07-08 16:46] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2421357/chapter-504-making-a-statement; [F7]34/504(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-09 16:54],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-09 16:54],[Wayback_first=1 2025-07-09 16:54],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-09 16:53],[this.word2025-07-09 17:38],[publish2025-07-09 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-09 16:00])Chapter 504 - Making a Statement - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 504 - Making a Statement

Shouts continued coming from the halted army as Max sat on the throne he had set up in the field.

He easily summoned stones from under the ground, creating a base over ten feet tall. It attached itself to the throne he had taken from Mylho Alora and used it as a seat.

All around him, the ground was covered in arrows, almost like someone had planted them in hopes that more would grow.

Holding the gem Everett had given him close to his lips, Max channeled a slight amount of magic into it, watching the yellow stone light up.

“Savantus Gilmenor, I’ve already taken your throne and your daughter. Have you come to let me take your life as well?”

His voice boomed across the open area, the gem doing its job.

From the back of the Elven army, it began to part.

Easily there were at least 15,000 troops, and it proved Tanila was right.

He summoned every guard and warrior in their kingdom. He plays with most of his people's lives in one battle.

Max was poised and ready, leaning forward on the throne, fully dressed for battle.

His armor had been dyed black, a symbol he wanted the army to understand.

He was death, having come to reap their lives.

Now only a little over a quarter of a mile away, Savantus stood before the army, his gold hair moving in the wind that raced across the battlefield.

A pair of golden eyes burned with a power he knew was beyond anything Tanila had ever shown him. Dressed in a simple red robe with runes that shimmered anytime he moved, Savantus looked almost unassuming if one discounted the color of his hair and eyes.

The King stood taller than most of the warriors around him and carried a small staff in his hand. Twisted branches, one black and one red, were entwined around a ball that changed color like a rainbow.

“It appears the boy has come… You were not supposed to be here… yet it won’t matter. Surrender, child, and I shall spare you so that Thuyja herself may do what she wishes.”

Power seemed to roll off the elf; Max could sense the aura even from this distance.

Rising, Max stood from the throne and motioned to it with one hand while holding the yellow gem close to his lips.

“We both know that isn’t going to happen,” he replied. “Still, it’s a shame what happened to your throne.”

Max used his Metal Mastery as he spoke, causing the chair to buckle and warp. With the palace's enchantments removed, his power was enough to manipulate it now.

Gasps and outrage were heard from across the distance as he quickly turned the throne into nothing but a ball of metal.

“That… was a mistake.”

As Savantus spoke, the clouds above him erupted with lightning, bolts streaking downward.

The question of how fast lightning was compared to him was answered as Max flew from his spot to the ground, able to run faster and use his abilities to maneuver better than in the air.

Stone walls rose, providing him a place to jump off of when needing to change directions quickly.

Had he had hair on his head, Max would have felt it standing on end. The air crackled with the amount of electricity in it, and for thirty seconds, the spell never ceased to end.

Only once did a bolt hit him, the pain of it coursing through his body.

Regeneration had quickly healed him, but one spell told him that Savantus had a legendary rank in whatever power he used.

As the elvish army charged, a wave of green, red, and brown bodies surged toward Max.

He could see a smile upon the Elven King’s lips.

Something tickled the back of his brain for the slightest moment, and he hesitated, wondering why a King would send so many of his people to face a person they couldn’t defeat, let alone challenge.

Two elves came quicker than the rest, armed with a sword and shield, their chain armor dyed red.

Max summoned his weapon, turning it into a large sword that most men would have to use two hands, yet he only needed one.

A single swing cut through the shield and armor, bisecting the elf in half.

Light filled his vision, and the elf exploded. Flames and magical energy covered him.

[Regeneration]

The pain was bearable but the surprise at what had just happened left him in shock.

An attack from the second elf came, easily parried, and Max frowned as he cut down the second warrior.

Once mor,e the second fighter erupted in a dazzling display of some sort of magical spell, and only then did he notice faint traces of blood from each of the elves flowing along the scorched ground toward Savantus.

What in the…

Not wanting to waste another moment playing like this, Max took to the sky, summoning ice storms and sending a fireball into the army below.

Everywhere his spells hit, magic erupted, leaving a blackened spot on the soil the elf had been standing before it died.

What made things worse was that, somehow, none of those around the one who died suffered injury from the magical energy.

A burning sensation began appearing, and Max glanced down at his forearm where a little bit of his skin wasn’t covered by any armor.

There, the outer layer was bubbling, burning away slowly, only to be replaced by his healing ability.

Spells came from areas in the crowd; every element was summoned and sent his way.

Hovering a hundred yards above the chaos, Max stared at the King, who wasn’t moving. He held both hands out as if waiting for rain to wash over him from the dark clouds.

Sending a stone spear at Savantus did nothing, bouncing off a wall of air or some other protective barrier, not eliciting a response at all from the elf.

Tanila told me it was bad… even still she couldn’t overcome the pain to tell me anything about her father’s real power…

Knowing the King was holding back so much and not showing it, the worst part was the army running past where he was, charging an undefended city because he had sent the guards away.

Goblin shite…

Flying downward, Max raced across the front line, setting up fire walls, causing the ground to open into holes, and calling down ice daggers and bolts of lightning.

Each death brought another explosion of magic.

Each death made him hunger for another.

In moments, the ground lit up like a firework show as he rained down destruction, keeping an army at bay, trying to resist the sirens' call that came.

[Consume is Locked]

The message rolled by hundreds of times, and Max groaned inside, wondering what he might be missing out on. Beneath him was a field of barley, and he was the thresher.

Yet with each swing of his scythe, the power that rushed into him seemed like nothing compared to the figure of Savantus.

Each death made the elf’s hair glow brighter.

He even appeared to have grown over a foot or two taller, now towering above his own men and women.

Arrows bounced off Max’s body as he ignored the attacks.

He struggled to stop the army below, not because killing them was hard but because he was changing.

Inside him it became harder to focus on Savantus.

Below were easy lives to claim and power to make his own. That knowledge drew him like a thirsty man to a bucket of water.

Even the truth that the water might be poisoned didn’t matter. All he wanted to do was quench the thirst he felt.

And that is what Max did.

He drank deeply from that bucket, sending stone and ice spears that tore through rows of men and women.

Wind blades took down dozens or more with each cast.

A small tornado was moving in one section, causing bursts of magical energy to appear in the air as elves died above the ground.

Every life caused the thread to Bob to swell and grow. It seemed impossible to imagine that it hadn't burst from the size it had grown to. Before the battle, it had felt like the size of a horse and was now approaching the size of Rakonath.

Yet below him came laughter, and Savantus still stood there, his hair shining like the sun, arms still held outward. Max saw the tendrils of blood that ran to the King's fingers.

From all over the field, it came.

Every spot an elf had died, blood raced toward the one they obeyed.

His shoulder felt the impact of an arrow, and Max watched it being pushed out of his body with his healing skill.

In the army below was an archer. She sent another arrow at him just like the one that had struck him.

She had drawn blood and so he returned the favor.

Lightning arched from his fingers, striking her and traveling through dozens of elves around her.

Each bloomed like a puffer flower, its seeds scattered from a simple breath.

Magical energy like nothing he had ever imagined replaced their bodies.

And the laughter grew louder.

When another minute passed and more than half of the army was dead, Max realized he had heard two men laughing, and he was one of them.

Every death filled his mana reserves and there was no end to the spells he unleashed.

When he sent something at Savantus, the elf didn't even bother to dodge it; he just laughed louder as it struck a barrier and dissipated.

Now the King had grown to about seventeen feet, his eyes like light beams.

No longer did he grow, but his skin began to turn red.

Flying near the king, Max saw that Savantus's skin was not changing color; instead, blood was beginning to cover it.

He felt it cautioning him in the back of his mind, and the Elven King snapped his fingers once as that sensation grew.

[Demonic Teleportation]

A lance of blood raced through the air, penetrating the space he had just been.

It was so fast.

Max flew further away, chasing down the elves that continued to race toward the city, ignoring the death of their allies.

The only ones who stopped were those armed with bows or spells. Every other elf continued to charge toward their deaths.

Summoning a large boulder, Max sent it rolling across the front line, using his skill to direct the growing ball of stone.

The world was beginning to go dark, even with the bright lights that shone around him.

Max! What is wrong? I can sense… something evil.

Rakonath’s voice seemed hollow in his soul. The connection was muted, struggling to endure the hunger that couldn’t be satisfied.

Beneath him was everything he needed to grow stronger. He just had to take it and claim it as his own.

MAX!

The voice called out to him repeatedly, and Max activated a skill in desperation.

[Berserker]

Under the shadows of the clouds, the world became a dark red color.

The hunger he had been struggling with lessened slightly as the urge to kill the elf he looked at took over.

Stones rose from the ground, forming daggers and flew, cutting down elves with surgical precision.

Each death sent a wave of cold.

Every so often, the same message came.

[Consume is Locked]

Yet his skill continued to refresh, and Max fought not to give in to the Berserker rage he so easily had overcome for so long and the hunger that called out to him.

Rakonath… I…

The world shifted as another hundred souls perished in a second.

Light bloomed in his mind, and his body was filled with power.

[Consume is...]

Links

//[2025-07-09 17:38]

[None]

[F7]35/505(1) Chapter 505 - Bob's Return

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-10 16:00 [2025-07-09 16:53] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2424178/chapter-505-bobs-return; [F7]35/505(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-11 16:56],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-11 16:56],[Wayback_first2025-07-11 16:56],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-11 16:56],[this.word2025-07-11 17:04],[publish2025-07-10 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-10 16:00])Chapter 505 - Bob's Return - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2]*/

Riftside Book 2/*[L2]*/

A newly-minted Hammerlord, Ash, finally has a home of his own and a party he’d fight and

die for. The next chapter in his life is about to start, but along with that come many

responsibilities, like…where do they put the monster trophies? And who gets what room?

Sometimes it is good to have simple problems as every new dawn somehow piles on more

and more dangers on his plate.

House Domitius is still coming for the smithy and for Ash’s parents. They will stop at nothing,

when a familiar face returns with reinforcement, even bending the guild and bank to their whim, or

using deadly force.

The Hive Mind unleashes newly evolved horrors at Sentinel Station, and every new wave is more

dangerous than the last. Holding the monsters back only serves to prolong the inevitable:

Dawnwatch’s fall, but there’s not much they can do with an even greater threat looming Riftside.

Something is picking off adventuring teams one by one, and leaving no witnesses. Peace has

become a luxury no one in Dawnwatch can afford.

But the greatest challenge may even come from within, as Roq demands his own

breakthrough, and the party weighs on keeping him secret from even Nabeeh and their

closest allies.

-Fans of Riftside 1 will devour this explosive sequel. If you crave relentless progression, strategic

party combat, epic loot, and a crafting system with real stakes, your next addiction is here

Chapter 505 - Bob's Return

[Consume is…]

[Consume is…]

Thousands of those message flew before his vision in a second like never before.

The cord to Bob pulsed unlike before, compressing in on itself.

Like squeezing a flask of water, everything stored inside was gone.

Max’s head rocked backward as he felt the surge of power and a presence he had yearned for return.

[Skill Consumed is Lower Rank of Current Skill]

[Power stored for future use]

That message came dozens of more times, yet Max didn’t care. Instead, all that mattered was what he heard in his head.

You… did it.

The voice he heard sounded almost sweeter than Tanila’s.

BOB! You’re–

[Demonic Teleportation]

His skill activated, and as his vision returned, Max knew it hadn’t been him who had done that.

Still, the traces of a blood lance were noticeable in his sonar.

Focus! We can talk later! I will handle this thirst, I need to–

Bob stopped speaking as Max felt his skill accessing both memories and gazing at the scene beneath them.

Savantus… he…

Yes! Now, are you okay? What–

Later. It appears I have missed much… you have grown… let me see what I can do to help.

As Bob spoke those words, the pressure and the amount of focus it took for Max to manage all the spells vanished.

Gone was the need to try and handle a hundred different things on his own.

The weight that had seemed difficult to carry alone was now shared between the two of them and Max couldn’t help but smile.

Your friend… Bob… he is… back?

YES! Max exclaimed as Rakonath reached out.

Do not bother us for now, little one. It appears we need to-

[Blink]

Four more lances of blood came, and Bob dodged two of them gracefully, using the ability only because there was no other way to evade the last two.

I shall not bother. Welcome home, Bob.

The tiniest of chuckles and also a groan rose inside him, and Max watched as his skill unleashed eight spells at the same time while managing their flying.

What is this…

Bob stopped his question and Max felt a sense of panic from his skill.

What is it?

Savantus has a blood ability, one from the Consume Skill, and it is dangerous. We need to avoid it.

[Ability Reset]

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Ability Reset]

[Demonic Teleportation]

Half a dozen blood lances came at them and Max held up his shield as Bob focused more on evasion for a moment than offense.

Those elves. Each death empowers him, yet I know we cannot allow the army to reach the city. Still, there are about 5,000 left, and the kind of power they will give Savantus will make this fight much worse.

Can I block these attacks? My gorgon shield?

No reply came as Max found himself back on the ground, reducing some of the King's vision of him.

Dust clouds rose as Bob commanded the air, creating a visual barrier between them and the Elven King.

It might block it or it might not. The risk is great and if it fails… we would play into his hand. None of your spells worked against him?

Each one was stopped before hitting him, on a barrier of some sort.

He pulled his bow out, sending arrows at the elves charging at them as Bob continued to keep a cloud of dust active, not running in a straight line.

Occasionally, a lance of blood would come through his sonar, off by anywhere from a few yards to thirty.

I… I missed you.

There, in the middle of combat, they cut down the number of elves even faster. Max shared the pain he felt due to the absence of his skill.

As did I, but focus. There is no time and I am hungry. That lust you felt welled up inside me. Part of me wants to take over but the other part knows I must not. You have learned to fight better. This boulder idea is genius.

Dozens of boulders had been sent racing into the rows of soldiers, flattening them like dough under a roller.

The earth turned into a quagmire as Earth Mastery made it harder to move through, and every stone beneath them rose to the surface, riddling the elves with holes.

Blades of wind, spears of ice, fire nova and more all rained down destruction upon the army. The numbers had been whittled down to less than a thousand in no time.

Between his bow and Bob's ability to manage most of the spells, they again became the reaper.

Now we must prepare for–

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Blink]

As if Bob had somehow sensed that things would change, a wave of blood rushed toward them.

Over twenty feet tall, it crashed against the ground, turning upward and giving chase as they sped across the sky.

Ignore the rest… the few at the gates and walls must handle them. It is time.

Zig-zagging through the sky, Max watched as the flow of blood that extended from Savantus became thinner, stopping its chase as they rose higher.

Lighting erupted around them as it had the first time, and now the bolts were blue.

A curse came from Bob as they took a strike from one to his shield.

Electricity raced through Max's body, and the damage was worse than the first one he had sustained at the start of this battle.

The ground, we need–

No! The blood is worse, we will endure this!

Shields of air and ice formed above them as the spell assaulted them.

Max felt the contents of his storage pouring out. All the stone and metal items he had kept inside were now being controlled by Bob, who infused them together, creating a dome above him.

Every strike broke off chunks of stone and metal, but Bob quickly fused them back to the growing sphere, summoning boulders and using them to reinforce it more.

Gods I've missed you.

Laughter erupted inside his head, and Max grinned, floating in the sky near the clouds as whatever spell Savantus had used couldn't breach the barrier Bob had created.

So what are we up against? You must know how bad Dagon was. This elf is supposed to be worse.

I do not know, but everything you thought was right. How did he know we weren't supposed to be here, and why is this army the way it is? The elf is no fool and sets traps both at home and here. I cannot believe he would sacrifice his people so easily without a reason.

Thuyja... it has to be her.

I would agree for now. Which means we are against a foe who most likely knows more about us than we might hope. That in turn means this fight will be won by tactics and thinking. Even with how strong you are, Savantus is old and powerful. He will have many plans in reserve. The only thing he won't be able to count on is how long we can last.

Both of them stared at the Elven King below, receiving a gaze back in return.

After almost a minute of nonstop lightning strikes, the spell subsided, and Max reached out, touching the protective barrier, and stored it.

Now what?

We go on the offensive. He'll be hard to hit, and I have no doubt that we cannot kill him in a single blow. Our problem comes in different ways, and I'm not sure we should ask Sog'thollech to assist, as you had considered.

But he is strong, much stronger now than before. Surely he–

No… he is connected to you and the skill I believe Savantus has will make him stronger if he tastes the blood of your demon. You can sense my concern about him tasting ours.

Max felt Bob's overwhelming concern about that. It was like wearing wet clothes, and they stuck to you, making everything you did feel weird.

And if he does taste our blood?

Then this fight will be much harder. He grows stronger from the blood he tastes. It is how he controls the elves and if he drank enough of yours… I

might struggle to hold back his ability. Savantus is a real threat, unlike any you have faced before.

Still hovering in the air, Max took a deep breath and considered what Bob was saying.

Worse than Igarra and Kazrak?

Worse than Igarra… Kazrak… he would probably lose to Savantus depending on what all the King has ability-wise. That is another reason not to use Sog unless you must. The risk is too great.

Max started to reply but stopped when he noticed that the Elven King was starting to move toward the city.

He was alone, the army that had surrounded him dead or charging on ahead.

Max knew that staying up here meant he wasn't a threat, and with whatever spell Savantus had cast and Bob had nullified, the King was making him act.

So face a foe stronger than us, don't get hurt, and keep them from the city. Sounds like our usual day.

A chuckle arose from inside and Max grinned.

I'll focus on not getting hit and trying to land a few. As always, I'll trust you with everything else.

I wouldn't have it any other way.

With the decision made, Max flew towards Savantus, his bow out and arrows raining down upon the King.

As he halted his approach toward the city, the elf's wrists and fingers started to move, spears of blood forming in the air beside him.

Each arrow struck a barrier a few yards before the King and vanished.

Bob was pouring mana into three different spells, creating a trio of offensive capabilities as they came at their opponent.

Once in range, Savantus sent over twenty different spears at him. Sometimes, it was a pair or a trio with another set sent flying a moment after the previous one took off.

Bob unleashed his spells, sending an ice and stone spear at the King while curving the wind blades to attack from both sides.

Facing forward, Max equipped his gorgon shield, praying that it would stop the six-foot-long spears, thicker than his wrist.

The first one he couldn't dodge struck the center of his shield, erased all his momentum, and Max was sent backward, almost tearing his defensive item from his hand.

[Demonic Teleportation]

Pain radiated through his arms briefly as his Regeneration worked to heal the impact.

What was that?

Power… true power. Do not do that again in the air.

Bob’s words were short and to the point. Both spears he had sent shattered upon an invisible barrier, and the wind blades found the same fate a second later.

Fight on the ground.

Twisting and turning as they continued their path at the King, Max couldn’t help but appreciate how Bob had used their momentum from being knocked back with the Demonic Teleportation to not lose much speed.

Max’s weapon appeared in his hand as more blood spears appeared and flew at him.

[Blink]

[Cooldown Reset]

Are you going to be okay with this?

I shall be fine. You have no idea how much power I got from those weak warriors. This will be another one of those fights. Retreat isn’t an option. From this point forward, we fight until one of us dies.

What about my Dimensional Space?

I would not trust nor depend upon it. If what I believe is true, he won’t be caught and placed in it. Likewise, if you choose to hide inside it, he will simply move toward the city and I doubt he would go as slow as he did a moment ago.

A quick glance showed that there was smoke rising to the south, a sign that the army had reached the outer section of the capital and had set fire to the houses they had come across.

Focus Max. Nothing else matters right now but this moment.

He knew Bob was right and forced himself to ignore the concern about Tanila and the others if he was facing this kind of monster. Right now, everything depended upon this moment.

Links

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[F7]36/506(1) Chapter 506 - Two Powerhouses Collide

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2426700/chapter-506-two-powerhouses-collide;
[F7]36/506(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-11 16:56],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-11 16:56],[Wayback_first2025-07-11 16:56],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-11 16:56],[this.word2025-07-11 17:24],[publish2025-07-11 16:00],
[this.Last_edit2025-07-11 16:00])Chapter 506 - Two Powerhouses Collide - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 506 - Two Powerhouses Collide

Giant holes filled the field, smoke rising from some, flames billowing out of others, while a few had ice fragments jutting upward.

Rolling and leaping, Max blocked another of the blood lances that came, wanting to curse yet knowing even that was too much of a distraction.

Every spell Bob sent continued to be deflected by a barrier that surrounded Savantus on every side, at least five yards around the elf.

Getting in close had failed when at least a hundred blood spikes went out in every direction from the Elf King.

Even now his left thigh hurt, the small wound not healing like a normal one would.

I’m almost ready. Keep in range.

Bob’s plan was their first real test of the king’s defenses. The only downside was that he had to stay within a hundred yards to do what they were attempting.

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Cooldown Reset]

Shi–

A spear struck the spot he appeared, and the smug look of amusement on Savantus’s face was a sign that he had figured out the potential range of his ability to dodge.

Once more, he was sent backward, skidding across the soil, jumping slightly to avoid falling into a hole Bob had made when sending spells from above.

Hurry!

No reply came but Max knew that Bob was doing everything he could.

Running forward again, Max charged at his foe, using wind magic to stir up a cloud of dust.

Another barrage of blood came at him. All three walls he created were destroyed, yet they slowed down the blood spear that broke through enough that he could push through the attack.

Max’s weapon struck out as he drew close, slamming into the barrier, causing a small burst of light to appear where they connected.

“You bore me, boy! She told me you were a worthy opponent!”

Savantus's lips turned into a frown as Max repeatedly struck against the barrier, never staying in the same spot between blows.

The area on the ground near the towering elf King was covered in blood, and Max sensed its shifting as he had before.

[Blink]

This time, a wave of blood spikes raced outward for twenty yards.

He figured out the range of Demonic teleportation!

[Cooldown Reset]

Almost done, be ready!

His evading of the spell caused the King to point the staff he held at him, a wave of power beginning to build up as blood formed around its tip.

Bob...

Max could sense the difference in magical energy, the pure volume of the mass of blood growing before Savantus’s staff was larger than him.

Just a few more seconds.

He wasn’t sure if he had a few more seconds, yet Max began to move, running around the King.

The glob of blood pulsed once, turning black, losing its dark red color and then came at him like a million strands of thread.

[Haste]

[Evasion]

As the strands moved out in every direction, the battlefield became a place of death. A sphere of black, thin magical threads squirmed as if alive in the air, stretching further and further from Savantus.

The air, stone, and ice walls were destroyed as Max used them to dodge and weave his way through the dense magical area.

[Fire Nova]

Flames radiated from Max, yet it appeared that none affected the black threads. What had happened in the blink of an eye caused Max to pull back over a hundred yards, gazing through a shifting dome of black.

Sorry, I had to–

You're fine. That is not what I had expected. Part of me recalls something like this. A memory still locked away, but that power… Do you realize he is still holding back?

Max nodded even though he didn't need to.

More blood spears came through the darkness, and he easily dodged and avoided them. His Stone and Earth Mastery created hardened sections of soil for him to push off, lest the power of his steps leave holes in the ground.

Time lost all meaning in that span of twenty seconds. His improved speed was too much, and Savantus stopped sending out strikes that never came close.

Eventually, the black strands began to withdraw upon themselves, the dome of magic returning to the tip of his staff.

A smug look of amusement was upon the King's face and Max streaked forward, weapon ready, knowing there weren't but a few seconds left before Haste wore off.

[Stealth]

The strike against the backside of Savantus's shield was brighter but nothing happened to let him know there was a chance he could pierce it.

Even now, his sonar could sense the protective area, having had enough time to adjust to the change in the air.

Three yards around the King was an invisible wall of some kind, worn like armor. Even worse was the red armor that covered the giant elf, two layers of protection against whatever Max might throw at him.

Now!

As Bob spoke and Savantus turned, four blood spears forming in mid-air, the ground split beneath the elf and a giant mouth of stone opened up.

For the briefest moment, the first look of confusion or something else appeared as an eyebrow lowered on the King's face.

Max and Bob both sent a spell of wind at the King, summoning his dimensional space behind the elf as the ground gave way.

A wall of blood instantly formed and stopped Savantus's movement toward the place they had hoped and laughter boomed from his lips.

"FINALLY! I knew you would try! She said–"

Savantus's words cut off as the stone mouth tried to close around his feet, which were in the air. The barrier stopped it from closing, and the rocks began forming

around it. Bob continued moving all the material he had collected from the underground area, making it larger and larger.

Blood spears began to attack it, shattering off sections only to be reattached right after.

Max used that distraction to attack again, bounding off an air wall and attacking from the King’s side.

[Power Strike]

His weapon shifted from the halberd to a giant hammer, crashing against the barrier.

Once more, a glow of magic came from the contact, and it was twice as bright this time as before.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Ultimate Form]

[Berserker]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

As the sky turned red and the King’s armor darkened, Max delivered three blows to the shield, watching as it cracked slightly on the third strike.

Two more strikes landed as Savantus turned his attention back toward him, both golden eyes narrowed at what had been done.

His sonar told him that dozens of attacks were coming for him, but Max went for broke.

[Harden Skin]

[Bulwark]

[Armored Warrior]

[Evasion]

Max’s weapon repeatedly struck the same spot, watching the barrier crack as blood spears struck. A few pierced his skin, and the pain of it burned, yet he ignored it.

Regeneration struggled against the wounds, and Max saw Savantus smile.

“Finally!”

It felt like his blood was being drained through a straw, and the elven King jerked slightly a moment later.

[Consume is attempting to resist Crimson Ascendancy]

HURRY! THIS IS THAT MOMENT!

Bob’s words rang out in his head. Everything came down to this chance.

[Spell Burst]

[Dispel Magic]

The barrier shattered like a wineglass struck by a hammer.

His sonar told him it was gone, and Max moved forward, ignoring the constant jabbing of blood spikes and spears that came.

He was surrounded by them, dozens sticking out of his body, yet Max swung his weapon again.

[Cooldowns Reset]

Two golden eyes focused on his attack as it came.

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

A loud crack sounded out as his weapon changed to an axe. Both hands held onto the shaft as the blade connected against Savantus's neck.

The armor that surrounded the king began to break under the blows.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

Once more, Bob reset his skills, expending the power they had gained and stored, not holding back.

It took another reset of his offensive abilities to free Savantus’s head from his shoulders. No rush of cold power came as it flew free, strands of blood reaching out from the King’s body to his head.

He’s not dead! Keep hacking!

More pain riddled Max’s own body as the blood-soaked soil beneath him shuddered and transformed.

A crimson forest of spikes, each one glistening as its blood-red shafts burst upward. They raced toward the sky, crashing into him and trying to suffocate the area around Savantus.

Max felt the pain of the ones that pierced him, the metallic scent of iron, and a taste of blood in his mouth.

Bob sent wind blades out in a circle from around them, cutting down whatever they could, fighting against the ones that rose up to replace what they had destroyed.

The King! I have these!

In the corner of his vision, Max could see the notifications streaming by, feeling the pain of the loss of his blood.

[Consume is attempting to resist Crimson Ascendancy]

Turning his attention back to Savantus, Max hacked at the giant body of the elf. His blade dug into the armor that covered the left shoulder.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

Like a butcher with a tough carcass, Max hacked away, using the power Bob had given up, and removed the left arm in a few seconds.

Wetness was everywhere as blood covered every part of him.

Max’s sonar told him how ghastly he must look, covered in blood from Savantus as well as his own.

Even as he flew toward the other side, already swinging at the right arm, he could sense that his Regeneration was falling behind due to the injuries.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

It took three resets to remove the King’s right arm, the blood armor growing thicker, yet unable to stop his attacks.

Bob unleashed a vortex of air, pulling stone and metal from their storage and sending out a destructive tornado that ripped through the ever-growing spikes around them.

Anyone else caught in this maelstrom would be cut to pieces as the magic of it all spun the objects with a speed Max knew would cut even him.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

He hacked away at the right leg, fighting against the ever-thickening armor, ready to deliver the blow to cut off that leg, when a jolt of pain came from inside his chest.

[Crimson Ascendancy - partial effect]

His heart felt like it had stopped completely, and his arms froze up, his muscles unable to move.

Gritting, Max could see the head that had fallen free from the shoulders, impaled on a spike, looking at him, the sounds of laughter coming from it.

Bob!

I'm trying! Hold on!

Strands of blood began to rejoin the gash he had created in the leg. Tendrils of flesh and bone began to reform, all made of blood that glistened as it flowed.

He realized then that the blood that had been used to attack was gone; only the spears still lodged in his body were active.

The rest rose over the stone prison Bob had created, covering the butchered body as a laugh bellowed from the severed head.

"So long… Only once… My boy… You are a treat."

Savantus's words didn't come from his mouth; instead, they were inside Max's head. Each time he spoke it felt like someone's hot breath was against his bare neck.

"It's been thousands of years since a King has had to use this… consider your death worthy of this moment."

Unable to move, Max watched as the stone prison dissolved into nothing. The chopped of pieces of Savantus all moved as one, a blood throne appearing and setting the oversized body of the King upon it.

A dome rose around them, blocking out the sky, and the world seemed to shift as everything except him turned red.

"You, Max Hoste, shall know the actual pain of what I can do. This is my domain. The Sanguine Domain."

Links

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[F7]37/507(1) Chapter 507 - A King's Trump Card

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-12 16:00 [2025-07-11 17:04] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2429500/chapter-507-a-kings-trump-card; [F7]37/507(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-12 16:36],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-12 16:36],[Wayback_first2025-07-12 16:36],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-12 16:35],[this.word2025-07-12 16:41],[publish2025-07-12 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-12 16:00])Chapter 507 - A King's Trump Card - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Saved for Baxter!

Chapter 507 - A King's Trump Card

Savantus grew even larger as his body rejoined.

Easily twenty-five feet tall, everything about the elf also transformed.

His skin became black, his gold eyes and hair turned red, and claws, like those of a predatory beast, formed upon his fingertips.

“Someone worthy of this… imagine that. She said you were strong… but I didn’t believe her till now.”

His laughter echoed off the half-mile-wide dome, every inch covered in blood.

Unable to move, Max’s body knew the sensation of what had happened. It was like when the gorgon almost turned him completely to stone.

Every ounce of blood that was in him was draining out, running along the dark, bloody floor beneath him and to the throne, forming a single vein into the King’s foot.

“You… I can feel and taste the power inside you… How are you resisting… I have no idea.”

Bob?!

Hold on… I’m trying…

“It can’t help you, boy, nothing can,” Savantus said with a laugh. “You’re mine. Like a puppet on strings, I can make you do whatever I want.”

True to the King’s words, Max felt his body start to move, dancing as if he were nothing more than some child's toy.

Laughter came again from the King as he rose, having grown again.

His body looked almost like Sog’thollech’s.

Black flesh turned into muscle with no fat. Savantus towered over him, shredded in a way that seemed impossible to believe. Gone was the look of an elf who might be a mage or some other ranged class. Now, the King appeared in a fashion most warriors would give everything to look like.

An aura of death radiated from Savantus as he shuddered.

“The strength I shall gain from you… Please keep resisting… I can drink forever.”

Standing there, Max tried to look out of the corner of his eyes, his neck not obeying his desires.

On the ground was his weapon, dropped when the King took his body over.

“Please… there isn’t anything you can do,” Savantus declared, rolling his eyes. “You are mine. When I am done with you, I shall find my daughter and let her share in the same fate.”

A fire burned inside him. Gritting his teeth, Max strained, willing something to happen.

[Formidable Mind]

Whatever strand had connected the King’s connection to his body was cut like a string with scissors.

His body fell backward, and Max caught himself, blinking twice as the sensation of pain overtook him.

Now, we go! Do it!

[All Cooldowns Reset]

Laughter came from Savantus at first as the elf pointed at him with a finger.

“You cannot resist me! This is my world! My gift from Thuyja!”

Blood came from everywhere, like a tidal wave crashing against a beach.

Max barely had time to get his fingers on the shaft of his weapon before he was sent tumbling, lost in an ocean of blood that had come out of nowhere.

Do it!

Growling, he ignored the fear that came. His sonar couldn’t pierce the blood that covered him.

[Ultimate Form]

Pain came, this time from his own doing as his body ravaged itself, growing once more. Every fibre of Max’s being felt like it was at its limit.

His skin and muscles felt so tight he feared they might tear at the slightest touch.

[Harden Body]

[Mirror Image]

Again!

[Cooldown Reset]

[Mirror Image]

Again!

Max made copies of himself over and over, sending out seven before his mind became unable to think straight.

Then Bob spoke, and the world came back.

Fight him, I have these. You’ll have to handle magic on your own.

Grunting, Max sent a Fire Nova out from around him and then used Wind Magic to create a vortex.

While immersed in blood, Max had heard laughter, but as the liquid was removed from around him, he sensed a change in the air.

Behind him was the sound of combat and he turned, forcing himself through the blood that tried to drag him back to where he had been.

Max exploded from the bloody floor like a whale breaching the ocean, spotting two of his images attacking Savantus. One was sinking into the floor of blood, its neck bent backward. Another one was coming from the King’s right side.

Savantus snarled, his claws raking against the armor of a copy of himself, tearing through defenses like paper. The spray of blood vanished immediately from the injury as his mirror image lost half its chest in a single strike.

Charging the King, Max could sense another copy rising from the floor.

Each of them wielded the same axe as he did, and sensing the chance, Max took it.

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Berserker]

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

[Stealth]

Appearing behind Savantus, Max’s weapon transformed into a spear, both hands on the shaft as he thrust it forward.

Being only a few feet shorter than the twenty-seven-foot-tall elf, Max felt the tip of his weapon pierce the black skin where he hoped the King’s heart might be.

The first attack pierced over three feet into Savantus, forcing him onto his toes. The next two each got another foot, and it felt like his blade had struck a bone.

A roar came as the King twisted while stepping sideways, freeing Max’s weapon.

Savantus took an axe to his left leg and another to his right as the mirror images struck just a moment after he had.

[Cooldowns Reset]

A dance took place as Max began to attack from all sides, getting two more full combos in before the whole world flipped upside down.

The four copies and himself fell, finding themselves standing on the ceiling for only a moment.

Claws raked across one face, with it a handful of flesh.

“This is my domain!”

Blood dripped toward the new floor as Max quickly spun, flying and coming back at the King.

Spears came at him from the ceiling, and summoning his shield, Max pushed past them. His new strength easily withstands the impact.

A bolt of lightning sprang out from one of his copies, striking Savantus, causing the elf to send the rain of spears at the offending image.

Go! He thinks it's you!

[Stealth]

Fire came from another copy, and Max watched as the King sent a barrage of bloody death to it.

With only one other copy and himself, they each came at Savantus, ignoring the two clones pierced by the King’s attack.

“You’re nothing, human! I will hollow out your soul and body!”

The King turned as he shouted, red eyes locking onto the last copy.

Walls of air began to form before it, and blades of wind rushed at the elf, who was still hanging from the ceiling.

Each attack that came for it missed, as Bob could control and react better with just one.

Max used the distraction, getting in close as Savantus wiggled his fingers, summoning half a dozen more spears every second.

Floating before the King, Max set himself and thrust.

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

The red left eye squelched as the tip of his spear pierced it, the thick shaft driving the entire tip inside the skull on the first strike.

Both of the other attacks were there, seemingly as one, and the speed of it all made it impossible for most even to comprehend that it had been three.

A beastial howl came as the feet stopped sticking to the ceiling and the weight of the King’s body dropped downward.

The sound of liquid came and Max looked down, seeing that the vast area they were in was filling with blood that rose from below.

Bob?!

I don’t know! He’s not dead!

Max stared at the lifeless body hanging from the end of his spear. No movement came and suddenly the right eye opened up, the red glow so intense as both hands swung at him.

He couldn’t dodge; something held him in place. The connection to Savantus was back, somehow forcing its way through his skill.

Pain came as they raked across his chest and stomach, the claws passing through his armor somehow, slicing him open.

[Regeneration]

His body burned on the inside; whatever damage that had been done felt like someone had shoved a volcano inside his stomach.

Wind buffeted the King as the mirror image Bob controlled slammed into their opponent, yanking it free from the spear and sending the pair of them tumbling. Claws ripped at the clone's back as they plummeted into the swirling vortex of blood that filled over half the cavern.

Time lost meaning as the Elven King twisted and moved suddenly, his speed increasing for no apparent reason.

“I told you! This is my domain!” Savantus shouted as he reached out with his hands.

Blood rose from the base of the room, thousands of strands, so many that Max couldn’t dodge, even with Bob’s help.

Like rope, they began to wind around his limbs, ensnaring and pulling him toward the vast ocean of blood below.

Shouting, Max unleashed everything he had, waves of flames radiating from him, stone spears and boulders assaulting the cords of blood.

Bob likewise activated every possible spell they possessed, sending wind blades and more, attempting to free Max from what felt like certain death.

Laughter came from above as Savantus floated downward, his legs connected to a thick strand of blood, moving near him as they approached the rising liquid.

“You are mine. I shall drain you dry.”

His body began to freeze up again; the connection the King had to his mind had returned as the cords that bound him also pierced his skin.

Everything began to turn blurry, and Max considered one last chance, unsure if it would work as his skill continued to try and sever their bonds.

[Formidable Mind]

Open it!

Max tried to summon his dimensional space and felt it fail. The hope that he might be able to escape inside it was crushed.

“No one escapes my domain,” Savantus declared, motioning with his hands at the area they were in. “Here, I am King. Here I am a god!”

Laughter filled the space of the domain and the Elven King smirked, watching as Max continued to be pulled downward.

“Thuyja granted me a blessing, a gift that will allow me to wipe you and those who stand against me off this world. Soon, it shall be just the chosen race. My race.”

His mind raced, and Max tried to devise a way to get away. Every spell he and Bob threw at the blood that had ensnared his body was useless, each attempt causing Savantus to laugh louder.

“Nothing in this world can escape this place, boy!”

This world…

Fuelled by that thought, by that word, Max went for broke.

[Planetary Travel - Waypoint]

A tearing sound came, and his body immediately felt like it was being torn apart.

The walls of the domain flexed for a moment, shuddering for a few seconds. And then a few small cracks appeared. Purple and clear lines formed as the ability tried to activate.

Focus on it!

Willing the ability to continue, a roar came from beneath him, a spout of blood coming toward him.

Savantus was racing toward him, hands out, the one red eye glaring at him.

“NO! That is impossible!”

Everything hurt, yet Max knew he didn’t have any other options.

Do it!

[Phasing]

[Haste]

Taking a breath felt like the worst imaginable thing. Yet not taking one seemed just as bad. His lungs burned, feeling heavy from what Max guessed was blood in them.

Bob flew him around the area of the domain, dodging the countless attacks that Savantus sent at them, geysers and blood spears coming from every direction.

Yet the rising blood faltered; the cracks in the walls had somehow stopped its advance.

“NOOOOO!”

Two spears almost struck him as Bob dodged left and right, sending spells back at the elf now resembling a demon.

The cracks in the domain grew larger each moment. Suddenly, the warm, humid air turned cold.

It plummeted instantly to a temperature so cold that the blood Savantus had been using to move with became solid in the blink of an eye.

Gone was the fire in Max’s belly, replaced with a pain of agony far worse as his skin started to break apart.

The cold froze everything; his eyes were blinded instantly, and Regeneration could not heal through it.

Hold on, keep focusing!

The pain grew until it ceased for a moment, coming right back as the layer of cold ate away at his nerves, agony coming back as his ability replaced them one time.

Can… I…

Max could sense the dread of it all as the cracks in the domain grew. He saw a place that he remembered. The words of Quilazmore asking if he knew about space and if he could survive it.

During those times, Bob revealed things in his dreams; they were in a space above the planets.

We need to escape… we cannot… fail.

Bob’s voice seemed weak and panicked. Max wasn’t sure if it was his mind failing or something else.

Small waves of sound came that his sonar detected, a groan of pain beneath him.

Tanila flashed through his mind.

She lay next to him, giving him a smile in that way that always caused his heart to speed up. Her hair wasn’t braided, strewn over her shoulder as she lay beside him. And then he saw her arm moving slowly, noticing the hand that rubbed her stomach.

The fear of losing them and the panic of his friend ignited the flame of what all this meant.

Death… a true death.

Facing that challenge, Max poured every bit of willpower into the ability.

[Spell Burst]

[Planetary Travel - Waypoint]

An explosion of purple and white light came as the cracks ripped across the entire space.

Chunks of frozen blood fell and crashed onto the floor below.

A howl was there momentarily and then cut off as a white light came, blinding him.

Links

//[2025-07-12 16:41]

[None]

[F7]38/508(1) Chapter 508 - Perks of Bob's Return

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-13 16:00 [2025-07-12 16:41] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2431783/chapter-508-perks-of-bobs-return; [F7]38/508(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-13 19:04],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-13 19:04],[Wayback_first2025-07-13 19:04],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-13 19:02],[this.word2025-07-13 19:10],[publish2025-07-13 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-13 16:00])Chapter 508 - Perks of Bob's Return - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 508 - Perks of Bob's Return

You… did it. For a moment… in that domain… his control was more than I had anticipated.

Bob’s voice was strong, and it helped Max through the pain he was feeling right now.

His sonar showed him how he looked. A monster to any who saw him, his body cracked and broken, the only flesh there was what grew back.

Bones were forming, having shattered under the effects of the cold he had experienced.

The agony felt like hours when it was only about ten seconds.

Blinking, Max groaned as he sat up, the ground around him rising in a large bowl.

“What in the…”

His words stopped as the scene before him appeared.

For over a mile, the ground was sunken, pockets of dirt and stone radiating slightly, and blood pooled in different areas.

Near him on the ground was a shape slowly reforming, and Max jumped to his feet, took his weapon out, and ran toward it.

Gurgling came as a dull golden eye looked up at him. If it had not been for the one left eye, Max might not have been able to tell who it was.

Both arms and legs were missing, blood seeping from open wounds.

Gone was the beautiful skin, the strong jaw, and the perfect golden hair.

At his feet was a hideous being, with barely any flesh left across its face.

“How…”

The raspy voice of that question would have scared children and some adults, yet Max stood there, a part of him struggling to believe this was the king that had stood here not long ago, taunting and laughing as he attempted to get close.

That single eye stared at him, yearning for an answer.

You’re not going to reply, are you?

He doesn’t deserve that. For what he’s done, I’m not sure a quick death is even something he should receive. Still...

Leaning against the shaft of his spear, Max shook his head at Savantus.

“Tanila and I will be married. Our child will be something to celebrate. Unlike you, I’m–”

“Cursed… you’re cursed!” the King declared, his voice almost gone as he spoke. “Thuyja, she–”

No other words came as Max kicked the butt of his weapon, spinning it in his hand thrust his blade into the left eye.

A sharp twist sent a cold sensation so different that it reminded him of the ordeal he had just escaped.

Max fell over, unable to stay upright, his blood boiling instantly.

[Consume has gained 30% of Racial Skill - Bloodline]

[Racial Skill - Bloodline has achieved 30%]

[Consume has Successfully Consumed 5 Racial Skills]

[Consume is unable to convert Skills due to Racial Type]

[Power stored for future use]

[Consume has successfully Consumed a skill]

[Would you like to learn [Blood Magic]?]

[Yes / No]

[Consume has successfully Consumed a skill]

[Would you like to learn [Heaven’s Storm]?]

[Yes / No]

[Consume has successfully Consumed a skill]

[Would you like to learn [Soul Harvesting]?]

[Yes / No]

[Consume has successfully Consumed a skill]

[Would you like to learn [Manipulate Soul]?]

[Yes / No]

[Consume has successfully Consumed a skill]

[Would you like to learn [Personal Barrier]?]

[Yes / No]

[8 Skills Consumed are Equal or Lower Than Rank of Current Skill]

[Power stored for future use]

His body burned, every piece of him feeling like it was on fire.

It slowly drew into his midsection and then, after a moment, stopped.

A foul sensation filled his stomach, and Max began to retch, heaving over and over until a slimy substance made its way up his throat and out of his mouth.

Spitting, he pushed upward with his spear, climbing to his feet and staring at the black gelatinous object he had just spewed.

Is that… blood?

Some kind of blood. I believe it's whatever is left from your body after you killed him and gained part of his bloodline. I'm unsure what will happen when you finally reach the required amount.

It took a moment to consider what Bob had just said. There was so much they still didn't know; if that came from this moment, he didn't want to imagine what might happen at 100%.

The others, you should go.

Ignoring the skills that begged him to take action, Max nodded and reached out with his mind.

Rakonath. How goes the battle?

It is over. Your mate has proven to all that she is the stronger one.

A chuckle from Bob filled his head as Max couldn't help but smile.

Can you–

Aerthen says that they have defeated the elves that faced them. The queen has fled, using an object like her daughter, it appears. She says, "I am to tell you that the dwarf impressed her with his fortitude."

Fortitude? What does that mean?

A few seconds passed, and then a laugh came through their bond.

She says she will tell you later.

You're as bad as her sometimes because we both know you know what she means. Now then, where is Tanila?

She and the golden warrior are on my back. We are coming to you.

Shaking his head, Max looked at the carnage around him. This area wouldn't produce any crops for a long time, and he wasn't sure what the long-lasting impact of their battle would mean to this place.

You can sense it… the evil and the magic. They will have to spend a great deal of time and effort to remove this.

Then the queens can handle this part. For now, I just want to see Tanila.

***

Neither had spoken upon her arrival, simply embracing the other, holding each other tight.

Her golden hair was a mess, and blood soaked her robes.

Max could see that her smile was forced, and as he held her gaze, she expressed more relief.

"You… you did it."

"And still you seem surprised?"

Shaking her head, Tanila stopped and then nodded.

"My… he was the strongest I had ever known until you. There was never a day in my life that I thought I could ever stand before him. He… he grew stronger from taking the blood from others, and I remember every time he had done it to me."

"Crimson Ascendancy. Is that what allowed it?" Max asked.

Taking a deep breath, she let it out slowly.

"That was part of it. He had other abilities, all designed to work with that one. Every–"

Her eyes looked out over the battleground, and she frowned.

"Where is the army?"

"Mostly dead… or should be dead," Max replied. "Anytime one of them died, they… exploded. Some sort of magical spell that damaged only me while sending their blood to him."

Tanila spat on the ground and then cursed.

"He used that… of course he did. Those warriors… all of my people…" She paused, a few tears starting to form and leaving streaks through the grime that was on her face. "Died for an elf that didn't care about them at all. He used them. He–" Both of her eyes widened, and she grabbed his arm and squeezed it. "What… what did you get?"

Her voice had become a whisper and Max glanced at Dexic who was still by Rakonath, scratching the scales on his snout.

“I haven’t clicked yes to any of them yet, but there are five to choose from. I think I’ll only take two of them based on the short conversation Bob and I had.”

“Five… that’s it?”

Shaking his head, Max shrugged.

“I had eight that were equal or below whatever I already possess. I also couldn’t acquire five racial skills. Which left me with Blood Magic–”

A gasp from Tanila made him stop as her eyes grew as large as a full moon.

“You didn’t?” she whispered.

“No… just like I won’t take the Soul Harvesting or Manipulate Soul abilities.”

Her face looked pained as he reached out and brushed her cheek, removing a few of the tears.

“You’ll never have to worry about me taking something that dangerous,” Max said softly. “I don’t ever want to lose who I am, no matter what kind of power is offered.”

She clasped her hand against his and leaned into his touch.

“I know… that’s what I always loved about you.”

“The other two are Personal Barrier and Heaven's Storm. You know of them?”

Tanila nodded, chewing on her lip.

“A barrier… that explains so much. I only knew about –”

Every pore on Max’s body tingled with energy, and the ground around them shook.

[Planetary Travel - Block - Overridden]

An earthquake far worse than the one that occurred in Windsor Wheel began, with the ground rising and falling like waves on an ocean.

Max grabbed Tanila and pulled her close, quickly levitating them both off the ground. He turned to see Rakonath using his mouth to deposit Dexic on his back, the silver dragon preparing to leap into the air.

What is this?!

A god...

His mind raced, and at the furthest edge of the bowl, on top of it, a bolt of lightning, followed by a dozen others, streaked down from the sky. Dirt and stone flew in every direction as a shape appeared from a portal.

He could feel Tanila’s pulse quicken as he saw the gold hair shining like the sun.

The darkness of the clouds above only highlighted how bright it was.

“It’s her,” she whispered, clinging to him tighter.

GO! FLY!

But–

NO GO!

With no concern for anything else, Max summoned his dimensional vault and tossed Tanila inside as carefully as possible.

Two seconds later, a hand gripped his throat, lifting him into the air, nails digging into his flesh and drawing blood.

“You… are a pest, and I shall–”

The god who held him in her hands was glaring at him, her golden eyes radiating magic as waves of power rolled off her, but the sound of two thunderclaps quieted her as a pair of portals opened up on the side of the bowl closest to the city.

Two gods came forth, wearing full armor and weapons, unlike the elf god's flowing clothes.

“THUYJA!”

Phaius’s shout caused the god to spit as she turned, still holding Max like he was nothing more than a garment.

Even grabbing her wrists with both hands, he couldn’t break free from the vise that held him tight.

Do not struggle. Wait… The moment will come but–

“Put him down!” Ockrim roared as the dwarven god appeared a few yards away, flanking the elven goddess.

Her flowing purple clothes changed so quickly to a red set of chain armor, the emblem of blood and a tree upon its chest.

“You two do not tell me what to do! I can take what I am owed!” she bellowed, her golden hair rising off her shoulders. “This one is–”

“No!” Phiaus shouted, pointing his sword at her as he crouched down. “You know who he is and what he is. Even you aren’t foolish enough to contest the system. Put him down or I shall ravage your people until you draw no more power from this world.”

Phaius’s voice felt like it could strip the bark off a tree, and Max’s sonar told him that the human god was poised to attack at any moment.

“He’s right, Thuyja,” Ockrim added. “I too shall call for a war against every world you own and will not stop until there isn’t a place you can hide.”

The elven goddess’s arm shook, taking Max for a ride. She huffed and puffed, her head twisting both to the left and right, and she held a staff in her other hand.

“He killed my king! My blood!” she roared. “Even now, he hides one of my own from me!”

“Not our concern or yours,” Phaius replied. “The rules, you know them. I paid the price for being foolish, costing me thousands of years' worth of power. Your decision right now could be far–”

Phaius's words were cut off by the sound of a crack, and Max felt his head removed from his shoulders. Blood ran down the elven goddess’s fingers as she laughed.

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

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Links

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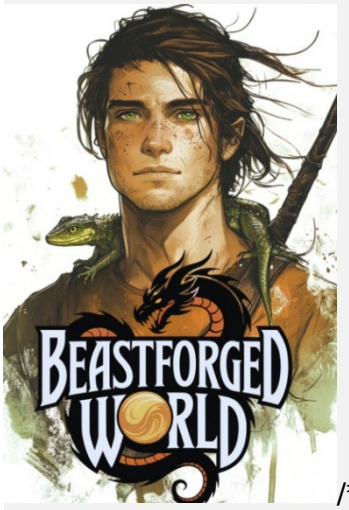
[F7]39/509(1) Chapter 509 - Fighting with Gods

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-14 16:00 [2025-07-13 19:07] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2434347/chapter-509-fighting-with-gods; [F7]39/509(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-07-14 17:21:48,=1 2025-07-14 17:22:23], [word.Waybak=2 2025-07-14 17:22:23],[Wayback_first2025-07-14 17:21:48],

[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-15 8:50],[this.word2025-07-15 9:00],[publish2025-07-14 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-14 16:00])Chapter 509 - Fighting with Gods - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES



/*[L1],[L2]*/

Beastforged World/*[L2]*/

Bound by the World. Forged through the Beast. Unleashed by fate.

They ruled Razarn once.

Then the old world fell, and the age of ether began.

Hunted and broken, humanity fled into darkness.

But in the depths of despair, they found power – Worlds forged from within.

With it, they bound the beasts that once hunted them to harness their power.

Mankind survived. They thrived.

Yet Razarn was lost.

What remained was ruthless. Alien.

And death waited at every turn.

***

They called him a cripple. Weak. Broken.

But Adam's will was forged in pain.

His World was too small to bind a beast, his body starving for ether.

Each day was a battle. Each breath a war.

Until the day his father came home—bleeding, dying... and carrying a beast egg.

Chapter 509 - Fighting with Gods

The sound of combat came for a second, and then the world swirled, a vortex of colors and light.

All Max could think of was taking a deep breath.

[Negate Death Blow - Activated]

[Cooldown Reset]

A rush of power flowed through hi,m and Max felt pain as magical energy washed over him.

Bob took over, flying him upward and away from the trio that created a ravine a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide in a second.

MAX!

Go! I'm okay! Get the others and be safe!

Beneath him, the true power of the gods played out, and Max felt so small, watching Phaius and Ockrim attack Thuyja simultaneously.

Each swing of their weapon destroyed hundreds of yards of ground, yet the other god seemed unfazed when an attack connected.

His speed was fast and yet all three of them were faster.

They're going to destroy this place... possibly even the capital. What can we do?!

Max said a small prayer as the trio moved away from the city for a while, zig-zagging and removing a forest of trees that had been hundreds of years old in the blink of an eye.

We must announce our presence, but I shall handle all the spells. Be ready.

[All Cooldowns Reset]

Bob flew them closer, chasing the warring gods as the planet paid the price of their actions.

"STOP!"

His voice did nothing to stand out above the battle's din, and even when he used the crystal he had been given, none of the gods noticed him.

We'll have to get closer... I'll... have to fight.

You will die again… I should be able to reset the cooldown in time but know she can easily kill us. Even with all your skills… I doubt it will do anything.

The pain of what he was witnessing from above made Max not care. Part of him appreciated the fact that Ockrim and Phaius had come when they did.

If it wasn't for them, there was no telling what Thuyja might have done to him or the ones he loves.

What's another death or twenty? Can you handle that loss of power?

A chuckle came from Bob.

Savantus gave me more than you can imagine and I have no doubt those three skills will provide vast amounts. I shall be fine. Come let us go join the battle.

[Ultimate Form]

[Berserker]

[Haste]

Max flew across the sky like a bolt of lightning, his weapon and body growing as the power of his ability kicked in.

In the improved state, he could follow the battle and the strikes, seeing a small opening that came and took it.

[Harden Body]

[Armored Warrior]

[Bulwark]

[Demonic Teleportation]

[Blink]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Ghost Strike]

[Rampage]

His spear thrust forward, and Thuyja's body twisted as the tip of his blade touched her exposed side.

The goddess had shifted as he appeared, the fake strike having sent her out of position as the real one struck rapidly.

It did no damage he could sense, but a power flow came from her before Phaius and Ockrim's attacks connected the next moment.

Thuyja was sent backward, the ground she slid on creating a furrow like a farmer for over a hundred yards.

"Don't!" Ockrim snapped. "You can't–"

A shield appeared before Max as the dwarven god protected him, hundreds of attacks bouncing off the metal in a moment.

“THUYJA! Stop this madness!” Phaius shouted as he took position next to Ockrim. “I’ve already sent the notification. You know what is coming!”

A primal roar that washed over him almost made Max fall to his knees.

“HE OWES ME!”

“Then collect the price when the time is allowed!” Ockrim bellowed. “For now, leave and do not return for a hundred years, or we shall rid this world of your claim!”

“You can’t! I am stronger!” the goddess shouted back.

Max couldn’t believe the sound that came next. Both men looked at one another and then started to chuckle.

“No… no you are not,” Phaius said as he relaxed slightly. “This mistake… You have cost yourself so much, and trust me when I say this… Wekime is watching. They’re all watching.”

Standing between the shields, Max saw Thuyja shake at those last words.

Her mouth moved, yet no reply came as she slammed her staff into the ground.

Seconds passed as the wind blew, and for a moment, the sound of it was all that Max heard.

“You, Max Hoste,” Thuyja bellowed as she pointed her staff at him. “I’m coming for you. Pray you do not pass the tower.”

A boom of thunder came as the ground shook, and a portal appeared.

“One hundred years!” Ockrim shouted. “Do not test me!”

She made gestures Max hadn’t seen before, but he didn’t doubt that it wasn’t nice, and both men scoffed.

“I’ll be waiting, Max.”

Having spoken those words, the elven goddess stepped back into the glowing purple portal and vanished.

It took a few seconds before both gods turned and looked at him.

“You have grown,” Ockrim said with a wink. “But you’re still causing problems it appears.”

“Would there be any other way?” Max asked. “I guess this is what you meant by Seth Pendal causing problems?”

Phaius started to chuckle, and then, when he and the dwarven god exchanged glances, they laughed.

“Every tower climber… were we like this?”

“You probably were,” Ockrim replied. “I was a good one.”

The tense moment before seemed to vanish, and then the armor and weapons disappeared, replaced by their flowing clothes.

“You should be safe for a while,” Phaius said as he looked up at Max. “Thuyja made a mistake that is going to cost her greatly. The system… they will punish her.”

“For attacking me?”

Both gods nodded.

“Rules, Max, rules. We are bound by them. Unless you come and start the fight, we are not allowed to intervene. To do so… is to break rules. There are times when gods can fight, but that is for another discussion. Perhaps when you finish the tower.”

“Which needs to be done soon,” Ockrim added. “You are drawing too much attention being what you are, and while I don’t expect any other god to make a move… a wise dwarf will tell you that moss eventually gathers on sitting stone.”

A groan came from Phaius, who rubbed his eyes. “Those damn dwarven sayings…”

Chuckling, Ockrim shrugged and patted Max’s arm as his ultimate form was dismissed.

“You’ve done well, boy. Dagon speaks highly of you, and the fact that you managed to defeat Savantus alone is a testament to your strength. Tell me, how did you escape the domain?”

The gaze both gods gave him left no doubt that neither had believed he was strong enough to do so.

“I attempted to travel to another spot on this world, it–”

“Conflicted with the domain,” Phaius said, interrupting him. “Still… for it to actually destroy it…”

“Well I also used Spell Burst to try and overcome the struggle,” Max replied.

“Spell Burst? On a travel spell?” Ockrim asked before chuckling. “That’s… ingenious and crazy. I never even considered that possibility.”

“It’s because it’s not an attack… except in a moment like that,” Phaius stated. “Still… Savantus wasn’t weak. Surely it couldn’t have been that easy?”

“Oh, it wasn’t,” Max said as he prepared to tell the story.

And then it hit him what was missing.

Summoning his dimensional vault made both gods back up, but each grunted as Tanila rushed out, falling into Max’s open arms.

“You’re ok!”

“I am… they came and saved me.”
Wiping the smudges and tears from her face, Tanila saw the two gods smiling at her and quickly regained her composure. She stood tall before bowing.

“Thank you for saving him. He means more to me than you might know.”

Neither god said a word, and Max could see where they were looking.

“It’s mine,” he said as the two gods stared a few seconds longer.

“An elf and a human… that must really piss her off,” Ockrim stated as he grinned.

“I can only imagine,” Phaius laughed. “How far along are you?”

“Halfway? I’m not sure,” Tanila replied. “With humans, you breed so fast and we elves…”

“She’s right! You breed like rabbits compared to elves and dwarves!” howled the dwarven god. “Only a goblin gives you a run for your money!”

Groaning, Phaius gave his ally a gentle shove. “We both know other races breed far faster than humans. Still… I must say… this changes so many things.”

“How so?” Max asked.

“A baby… from two tower climbers, this far along in the tower… I…” Phaius paused and his brow furled.

“What is it?” Ockrim asked. “Surely you can’t…”

Both gods' eyes widened, and they almost simultaneously reached up and stroked their chins or beards.

“That… will be something I haven’t heard of in over forty thousand years,” the dwarven god said slowly. “Can you imagine…”

“Uh, what are you two talking about?” Max asked.

Both gods regained their composure and made different facial expressions for a moment.

“A child does not often survive the climbing of a tower. It has happened,” Phaius replied. “Dwarves and some other races are heartier, and their women are stronger. Many have been pregnant while climbing and given birth to children who are stronger and often taller than the rest of their kind. Very few have ever been past the thirtieth floor in the tower…”

“He’s right,” Ockrim said as he puffed out his chest. “There are many different gods for dwarves and each of us has one specific quality. All dwarves are known for their constitution. But back to the point at hand, when someone is pregnant and carrying their child while fighting in the tower, a small portion of that power is transferred to the child.

“Long ago, some had figured that out and tried to make stronger children but the problem was and is, only certain classes can stay safe and still help their party.

Healers, mages, archers, and a few other classes on other worlds face less risk than a melee class.

“Still if you have this child… after you complete the tower…”

Max felt Tanila squeeze his hand as they waited for the dwarven god to finish.

“Your child would be… a child of a god. A *true* child of a god.”

“A child of gods,” Phaius said. “Something that hasn’t happened in so long, most don’t believe it is anything more than a myth. *If* word of this gets out… You will find yourselves… the focus of many things.”

“So what? Do we not complete the tower?” Tanila asked. “Is the risk that great?”

Ockrim sighed as he smiled at her.

“I wish we could answer that in a way that would make everything better but the truth is, you two will never not be at risk. Those with power find themselves always under attack by those who want it. Some attack head-on, while others lay traps and plans, attempting to take it by subterfuge. You two only have one option and that is to keep moving forward. The only safe spot comes for a brief moment after you defeat the tower and then–”

Ockrim started to gag, his mouth open and no words coming.

“You can’t talk about that,” Phaius teased, wagging a finger at the dwarf. “Now then, we’ve been talking and I still want to hear about how this fight took place. And you know as well as I do, we need to leave here and check in. I do not doubt that we will be called to testify soon.”

A grunt from the dwarven god and a nod was his only reply.

“So then, Max. Tell us, how did you defeat Savantus?”

Links

//[2025-07-15 9:00]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/beastforged-world-aacaoqbhurc.jpg?time=1752231693

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/124669/beastforged-world

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[F7]40/509a(1) Chapter 509a - Plans Working Out

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-15 16:00 [Next Chapter: 2025-07-15 08:54] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2437096/chapter-509a-plans-working-out; [F7]40/509a(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-15 17:30],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-15 17:30],[Wayback_first2025-07-15 17:30],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-16 8:36],[this.word2025-07-16 8:43],[publish2025-07-15 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-15 16:00])Chapter 509a - Plans Working Out - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 509a - Plans Working Out

The two laughed, hugging each other in a rare exchange of public emotion.

Hundreds of other gods had left, and the truth was that many small groups huddled in different places, discussing moves to make based on the council's decision.

“She screwed up far more than we could have hoped! The webs we laid finally trapped her!”

A shake of the head was all her cloaked friend gave.

“No… she is not trapped yet and it appears you were right after all this time. This Max Hoste… he has proved himself better than we could have imagined. Still, many want to hear what will come next. You have reached out to the others?”

“I did, but why can’t you be excited? Surely you realize how special this moment is!”

Her rare friend in all this game sighed, shifting the hood that hid her image and presence from those who might look upon them.

“This is a very special moment and one we have both been waiting on for some time, but you heard what I reported. We are nothing in this game. Pawns… what we desire will take even more power and I am anxious about what comes next.”

“If he completes the tower?” she asked.

Her hooded friend nodded.

“The rumors are that one of the other black skills is close to finishing it, with the second one not far behind. Even though he was first, he has not progressed at the pace we expected.”

“Do you really believe the skill doesn’t control him? Surely that cannot be true?”

Silence was her reply as her friend looked both ways down the hallway.

“I’m not sure. There are no records beyond what must happen. If Thuyja ended his life and he lived… I wonder what we are facing… You know some want one or two of the skills to die before the moment comes.”

“Through chaos, rebirth.”

“Through chaos, rebirth,” her friend echoed. “Now then, I need to report to those we bound ourselves to, as do you. We shall see what comes from this opportunity.”

She reached out and received a less stiff hug this time, smiling as her only real friend quickly moved down the hallway.

You must complete the tower Max... everything I desire depends upon it.

Links

//[2025-07-16 8:43]

[None]

[F7]41/510(1) Chapter 510 - Rewards

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-16 16:00 [2025-07-16 8:42] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2439774/chapter-510-rewards; [F7]41/510(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-18 9:29],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-18 9:29],[Wayback_first2025-07-18 9:29],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-18 9:27],[this.word2025-07-18 9:58],[publish2025-07-16 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-16 16:00])Chapter 510 - Rewards - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 510 – Rewards

[Skill Description - Heaven’s Storm]

*****

Heaven’s Storm - Legendary Skill: The user can summon the wrath of the heavens in the form of a lightning storm. This storm grows stronger with each cast, quadrupling the cost of mana with each cast. The spell lasts thirty seconds and requires a minute before being cast again. The power and damage will be reset if not used within ten minutes.

*****

[Skill Description - Personal Barrier]

*****

Personal Barrier - Legendary Skill: The user gains a magical protective barrier that can stop most physical and magical spells. It requires 5% of the user's maximum mana pool every minute. If the user's mana runs out, then the barrier ends. Extreme, sustained damage can break or penetrate the barrier.

*****

Max reread the notifications and tried to figure out how strong these new abilities could be.

I’m assuming you have an opinion on them.

Both will need to be tested. I’m very curious about Heaven’s Storm. That cost and the method it must use explains why Savantus only cast it twice. And then factoring in how much mana that barrier uses, I think he was toying with us, trying to draw us into range of his Blood Domain.

Which I’m assuming is not something most people could contest like we did.

You saw the reactions of both gods. That was a wise move on your part. The breaking of it seemed to tear apart the domain and space itself came in, freezing the two of you. All I can come up with is that the blood he had to pool from was ruined and destroyed, leaving him just as broken and shattered as you were yet with no real way to regenerate.

Any other possibility leads me to believe we would have died in there eventually. You saw how much blood there was.

Max grunted and Tanila turned to look at him.

Smiling he kissed her cheek, gently squeezing her waist.

A laugh came, and then Max felt Dexic's grip tighten.

“What’s it like being in the middle?!”

Snorting, Max turned his head so see the golden warrior grinning from ear to ear.

“Honestly, I never imagined being the little spoon!”

Both women howled in laughter as Rakonath flew toward the Faction grounds.

So your skill is right? That you escaping was pure luck?

Luck? I don’t know… everything I have seems… almost as if it was planned sometimes. Other times I wonder if anyone could have put all this in motion. Did your Father know I would get a dragon egg? Is that why he gave me the mark? The possibility of all that happening by his hand is impossible to comprehend.

Some parts of life are luck and others are because we are led down paths. You, Max Hoste, were lucky to have gained the skills you did. In the same way you were lucky to have gained me. Anyone else on this world would have turned it into a desolate wasteland.

Could someone else have defeated Savantus if they had acquired you?

Bob was silent as he pondered that question while Rakonath thrummed.

All I know is that since I’ve been bonded to you, the odds and things you face keep getting stronger. Then I saw that elven god do what she did… her fingers squeezed you like a rabbit in my talons.

Considering all those questions, Max held Tanila tighter, his pinky gently stroking the baby bump.

***

Cheers filled the grounds as Max and the others climbed off Rakonath.

Waiting twenty yards away were Fowl, Batrire, and Cordellia, along with everyone else in their faction.

“Max!”

His dwarven brother and friend rushed forward and embraced him, lifting him and shaking him a few times.

“You bastard! Making me wait this long! And then having to find out you met Ockrim… AGAIN!”

“Yeah… he told me to tell you he loves me more.”

Laughter from their healer and ranger came as the duo joined in the hug.

“Good work, you three. I heard great things from Rakonath and can’t wait to hear what happened,” Max said.

“Oh gods no,” Cordellia groaned. “His head's already big enough after Aerthen praised him before everyone.”

Max looked around and saw the red dragon in her humanoid form, laughing and drinking with Tom nearby.

“Can I interrupt?”

Max and the others turned to see Everett a few feet away, grinning at them.

“Sure, what’s up?” Cordellia asked.

Nodding with his head, the older man smiled. “There are about a hundred adventures here that want to celebrate, and the city is already preparing for a holiday in two days. Everyone who fled is returning home, and I doubt there will be any alcohol in this town by the end of the week.”

“What about the other Factions and the adventurers who helped?” Max asked as he moved to Tanila’s side. How many did we lose?”

Frowning just a little bit, Everett shrugged. “I’m not sure of the exact numbers but not many. You six prevented the destruction of the capital and saved so many lives. Even the army that got past you only did superficial damage to the outer north edge. For now, let’s celebrate. Trust me you all need it.”

“Did he say six?” Fowl asked and got a bonk on his head from their healer.

“He did you fool. Dexic!” exclaimed Batrire.

“Oh, that’s right. Shame she wasn’t as gifted as I was.”

Groans came from both women who had been with their warrior, and Max gave them a quizzical glance.

“I’m not telling the story,” Cordellia muttered. “Ask him or the dragon. I’m going to go get myself a drink.”

***

“There I was, all alone before ten thousand elves, calling out for my blood!” Fowl proclaimed, standing on the table in the middle of the gathering, waving a mug of ale around. “Was I afraid?” Sure! Did I shite myself? Maybe!”

Laughter came as everyone listened to the dwarf tell the tale for the tenth time, not caring that he added more each time he told it.

“I’m glad he’s the hero,” Max whispered into Tanila’s ear as they reclined on a couch someone had *borrowed* from the Faction. “He does a much better job of making himself look bigger.”

“Fowl’s having a blast and so is Batrire,” Tanila replied. “Still, I can’t imagine what my mother thought about his newest ability.”

Nodding slowly, Max wondered what it would be like to have the one their warrior had gained from the last set of skill potions.

“Spell Magnet didn’t sound as cool until then, did it?”

“Nope,” she replied. “But I guess that’s why she fled so quickly. Hard to stand up to a group where every spell you cast hits him and does nothing. Besides, how many of their archers killed themselves from his thorn aura?”

“Millions based on the last telling,” Max said. “So… your mother… what should I do?”

A sigh came from Tanila as she snuggled into his embrace.

“Nothing… let her be for now. She has no army. Her people will not allow her to run over them like mine… Savantus did. Perhaps she can rule until another one can replace her. From what you say, it will be 100 years before Thuyja can return, and in that time, who knows what will happen.”

“Two kingdoms with queens… hopefully the dwarves won’t make the same mistake.”

She turned and glared at him. “Are you saying queens are bad?”

Max shook his head and grunted. “No… just that those three queens aren’t the best example of them. You my dear would make a great one.”

She snorted and turned back around. “I don’t want that role any more than you want to be a king. Besides… I’m more interested in what Ockrim and Phaius said about our child. Do you think they could be… right?”

Taking a deep breath, Max sighed.

“Honestly… I would have to assume they both told the truth about how a child who is carried while they are unborn in the tower would be stronger. All of us have changed

because of what our bodies have gained. Still… I’m more interested in what they attempted to say but couldn’t.”

“What happens after the tower?”

Max nodded. “Part of me wonders if there will ever really be a day I can just enjoy being marri–” he stopped himself and felt her shift in his arm.

“Max…”

Slowly, he lifted her, using both his natural strength and some wind magic to ensure her support, and sat her on the couch. Next, he slid off it, kneeled before her, and smiled.

He saw her gold eyes tremble as he summoned a tiny metal box.

“You…”

Holding a finger to his lips, Max opened the ornate metal box and showed a ring pinched between two green cushions.

Three different bands were intertwined to form a pattern of gems.

Diamonds ran along the top one, with emeralds on the bottom.

Between those two rubies were cast with a pair of black gems and a larger diamond in the middle.

“Tanila Gilmenor, love of my life and mother of our child. You are the anchor that keeps me safe amidst the storms of life. Like this ring, both of us have power that wants us to be something we don’t desire, yet together, we are perfect like the one in the middle.”

Pulling the ring free, he took her shaking hand, slowly slid off the first ring he had given her, and replaced it with this one.

“This time, I ask because I want nothing more than to do it on my terms and with a ring I designed. I don’t ask because our friends are here or because I feel like I’d hurt you even more if I didn't.

“You are my everything, and if you’ll say yes, we can be married in just a few days.”

Tanila blinked and looked up from the ring he had placed on her finger at him.

“In a few days? Why in a few days?”

Smiling, Max kissed the hand that he held.

“Because in a few days, we celebrate the changing of our world and I want everyone to know that without you, it wouldn’t have been possible. Also because I don’t want to wait any longer,” he admitted. “If you need more time, I under–”

“I do!”

Blinking, Max looked at her, saw the smile amidst her tears, and reached up to wipe them away.

“You’re certain?”

“Are you asking me if I want to back out and keep the ring or if I’m certain about being married in two days?”

Snorting, Max grinned like a fool. “The latter of course. Only my wife gets to keep the ring.”

Tanila leaned forward, grabbed his neck and pulled him close.

“In two days you’ll be my husband or you'd better have one hell of an excuse that tops even Fowl’s current story.”

Laughing, Max kissed her, feeling her kiss him just as passionately back.

A loud cheer and roar came from around them, and they both turned to see the entire faction shouting and yelling.

Rakonath was belching fire into the sky and no one seemed to care about how dangerous it was.

All Max could think about was how special this moment seemed.

For once in so long, there was a true joy in the air and he wouldn’t trade anything for it.

“Took you long enough,” Fowl proclaimed as he and the other two of their party came forward first. “I was beginning to think you didn’t have a pair down there.”

“Oh, I do,” Max replied. “And you’ve seen how big they are.”

Groans and laughter came from everyone as the crowd rushed forward, wishing the two of them congratulations.

Links

//[2025-07-18 9:58]

[None]

[F7]42/511(1) Chapter 511 - Wedding Day

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2442747/chapter-511-wedding-day;
[F7]42/511(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-18 9:29],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-18 9:29],[Wayback_first2025-07-18 9:29],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-18 9:28],[this.word2025-07-18 10:07],[publish2025-07-17 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-17 16:00])Chapter 511 - Wedding Day - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 511 - Wedding Day

Standing on a platform raised in the Colosseum, Max tried to understand how everything had come together so quickly.

All around him were flower garlands, strung together and covering the open area as a canopy from the sun.

Each seat was packed, and one’s station in life didn’t matter as a lottery was conducted, giving everyone an equal chance to attend such a moment. Pauper and noble sat shoulder to shoulder, and none complained as each person watched in anticipation of a wedding that had sent the city into a tizzy upon its announcement.

Molly and Macy had opened the city coffers to help get things together in time and Dagon was present, having brought as much dwarven ale as he could.

His suit had been crafted by the best maker in town. What made things even more special was that his mother helped make Tanila’s dress.

Glancing around, Max saw the four who stood by him, all dressed in gold like he was.

Fowl was rocking back and forth slightly, still a bit anxious as the best dwarf. Beside him was his father, looking better than Max could ever remember.

Next to him was a towering warrior who had introduced him to this faction and forever earned a place at his side.

Dexic smiled at him as he looked down the line at the last person there.

Pete looked absolutely in shock. He had been unable to speak when he had teleported to the city and asked the dwarf if he would be one of his attendants.

If it hadn’t been for his friendship with Fowl, Max would have been shocked at the amount of tears and snot a dwarf excreted in joy.

All four of them smiled at him, and each nodded as he waited for the moment that was about to start.

Across from him stood Cordellia, dressed in a forest green color that accented her beauty. Her hair was done perfectly, and she smiled at him, a tear breaking free from the corner of her eye.

His sister chuckled and rolled her eyes before winking at him as she waited third in line.

At the end was the happiest of the bunch.

Max couldn’t help but laugh when Tanila told him she would ask Alfreda to be one of her bridesmaids.

They were thankful that a healer was on hand when the older elf passed out, completely in shock that they would want her there.

Turning his attention to the front, Everett stood there, dressed in a black outfit, with a large pin of their faction on his chest.

A nod of his head came as the older man signaled to someone off stage.

Trumpets began to play and the crowd went silent.

When they stopped, harps began to ring out, and the melody of an elvish song came forth, with a few wind instruments joining in.

Two large doors swung open, where a path of flowers ran to and gasps were heard from those in the crowd who could see Tanila from the display above.

Part of Max wanted to turn his neck upward and get a peek. The other couldn’t tear himself from the doorway, waiting for this moment.

His breath caught in his throat as she stepped forward, Tom at her side, and slowly made her way along the flower trail toward the platform.

A veil covered her face, but her gold hair was braided and sparkling with gems. Her dress fit her perfectly, accenting her natural physical beauty while somehow avoiding overemphasizing that she was carrying their child.

Beneath the veil, he could see the gold eyes that locked onto his.

She laughed suddenly as Tom whispered something and the crowd chuckled along with them.

“What did he say?” Fowl asked.

“Beats me, but I’m sure they’ll lie about it later,” Max replied.

Each step felt like a dream and soon they were at the platform, walking toward him.

“Gods, she’s beautiful,” Fowl said quietly.

“She is,” Max said back.

“Oh… I mean yeah, Tanila looks good, I was talking about Batrire.”

Laughter came from his attendants, and Max finally realized that behind Tanila was Batrire, dressed in the same green as the other women and holding a bouquet of flowers. Her beard and hair were braided, and he had to admit that she did look great, but no one compared to the woman before her.

Smiling, he turned his attention back to Tanila and moved beside Tom, who winked at him as they approached Everett.

Every second seemed perfect, and Max couldn’t help but stare at her through the veil. It was just thin enough to show her smile and those eyes. Neither of them could look away, and it took his friend's assistance to avoid looking foolish.

Take her hand!

Max shook off the fog that had him and took Tanila’s hand from Tom, who gently patted his shoulder before moving off to join his attendants.

“Had anyone told me that these two would be wed the day after they entered our faction and joined, I would have told them that Max was going to be in trouble,” Everett said, his voice carrying to all within the open-air Colosseum.

Laughter and chuckles came from the crowd as the older man continued.

“Both of them were steadfast and confident, sure of what they wanted and what they could do. Since that first meeting, I knew they were different and looked forward to seeing how great they would become. Today I get to be part of their growth, joining the two of them together in marriage, a testament of love and example that there are no boundaries to stop one from loving another.”

Everett smiled at him and then at Tanila.

“The two of you have your own vows. Speak them to each other and before those gathered so that they will know the depth of your love for each other.”

Max turned, holding Tanila’s hands as she stood there, waiting.

The veil…

Groaning internally, Max reached with both hands and quickly lifted it, his fingers almost failing as he saw how amazing she looked up. Every square inch of her face was flawless and her lips almost begged him to lean forward and push them against his.

She winked at him as he retook her hands.

“Max… since the day we met, there was something I couldn’t figure out about you. So many times, I have been told that men and humans are selfish and only look out for themselves first. Yet every day I spent with you, I saw a man who cared about everyone, regardless of their race or sex.

“Even though you didn’t know it, dozens of women threw themselves at you and somehow, I’m the one you wanted.”

Chuckles came from Fowl, and Tanila’s smile grew.

“You showed me what love is. That it’s unconditional. That’s ugly. It hurts to love because you hurt when the one you love suffers. You rejoice when I succeed, even if it means you fail. While others horde, you give away, trying to help others prosper.”

She swallowed after taking a deep breath.

“You, Max, kept me from losing myself in the thirst for power. You gave me something to hold onto, and now I look forward to the day we both have another to love.”

Freeing one of her hands, Tanila touched his cheek gently and smiled.

“I love you, with every part of m,e and cannot wait to be called your wife.”

A tear ran down along her nose, and Max used his thumb to gently and carefully whisk it away.

Taking her hand, Max smiled at her.

“Tanila… you know my darkest secrets and struggles and yet you stayed by me. I’m the man I am today because of you.”

His voice struggled momentarily as Max admitted the truth he had always known.

“If it weren’t for you, this world would be darker. Since the day we met, I knew you were different, and my mind and heart couldn’t wait to find out what it was. Having spent all our time together, I cannot wait to spend the rest of our lives with one another.”

Squeezing her hands gently, he smiled.

“When I was kidnapped, taken to another world, and faced with giving in to the darkness, you are the light that guided me home.”

Ignoring the gasps and murmurs from the crowd that didn’t know about those details, Max freed a hand and brushed her cheek.

“I want nothing more than to be your husband and for you to be my wife.”

Applause broke out in different areas of the Colosseum and Everett gave them a moment before drawing the attention back to the wedding.

“With your vows spoken, we now move on to the rings.”

Fowl and Batrire stepped forward, smiling as they handed the rings to each of them.

“Their moment is different than most,” Everett proclaimed. “Unlike so often, we ask if one will honor, cherish, protect, and love, but we do not need to do that with these two.

“You see, as tower climbers… as adventurers… as heroes who protected this city… who protected each and every one of you, they do this already.”

A roar of applause came, and the Faction leader held up his hand, cutting it off after a moment.

“So I don’t need them to make these promises because they have bled for each other, sacrificed for one another. Now they simply wear a symbol of love, another outward sign of their commitment.”

He nodded at Ma,x who took his ring and slid it onto Tanila’s finger.

A moment later, she did the same to him.

Both of them fingered the rings slightly with their thumb, still holding hands with the other.

“Now, all that is left is one more thing.”

Aerthen appeared from behind, moving slowly. Murmurs came from the crowd as her tail moved along the ground from under her green dress.

She came to stand next to Everett and let out a low laugh before smiling at the two of them.

“Today, not only elves, humans, and dwarves see the union of these two, but know that others from this world look forward to this union,” the older man proclaimed. “As such, this next moment comes with a blessing unlike any other.”

Everett motioned to the two of them, and they put their hands on Aerthen’s open palm.

She then covered theirs with her other hand and closed her eyes.

A hum came from her as she cast a spell, warmth and heat growing as red light escaped through the cracks of her hand.

Max could sense something similar to the time Wekime had marked him.

Glancing at Tanila, he saw her eyes locked on Aerthen, neither of them certain what would happen.

[Blessing Acquired]

[Blessing of the Father - When near one of his children, you shall receive a bonus to resistance against magic. 5%]

His eyes widened at the notification, and Max saw that Tanila was as shocked as he was.

“May your marriage be blessed,” she whispered, almost panting.

“Thank you,” Tanila whispered. “For everything.”

Aerthen nodded and took a step back as Everett moved forward, an eyebrow cocked at the two of them.

Clearing his throat, he smiled.

“Now that that moment is over, we come to the part we all have been waiting for. May I present to you Max and Tanila Hoste!”

The crowd erupted in cheers and applause, and a bright stream of fire shot up into the air from where Rakonath had been watching from.

“You can kiss her,” Everett whispered.

“I know,” Max replied as he stepped forward and pulled Tanila close. “Now I can kiss her whenever I want.”

Links

//[2025-07-18 10:07]

[None]

[F7]43/512(1) Chapter 512 - Floor 79 [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2445733/chapter-512-floor-79; [F7]43/512(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:40],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:40],[Wayback_first2025-07-21 10:40],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-21 9:54],[this.word2025-07-21 12:43],[publish2025-07-18 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-18 16:00])Chapter 512 - Floor 79 - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 512 - Floor 79

Max laughed as Tanila let out a groan.

“Hey, share the bed!”

“Please,” she replied as her arms and legs reached out to the four corners, taking up most of the mattress. “You try carrying a child and see how well you sleep. *Especially* when they decide to dance all night long.”

Sitting up, Max leaned over and kissed her bare stomach where their child was causing her skin to occasionally rise from its movements.

“Be kind to your mother, little one. Someday, you’ll find out she’s the greatest person in the world.”

He felt Tanila’s nails gently rub across the top of his head, and he gladly lay there for a few more moments, enjoying her touch for a bit longer.

“You need to get up and get dressed. We’re due back at the Faction house.”

“Does this mean we can’t take one more dip in the ocean?”

Chuckling, Max raised both eyebrows at her playfully.

“For you, absolutely, but only if you promise to do it like we did the first time.”

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“Seems like you two had a great honeymoon,” Cordellia said as she smiled at them. “And do I detect a hint of sea salt?”

“One last dip in the great waters before we came home,” Max replied between bites of the biscuit and gravy the faction had served up this morning for breakfast. “I almost had to carry her to get her out of bed.”

“Bah, you could go anywhere for three days, and you two choose the ocean,” Fowl muttered. “Plenty of good caves and mountains to visit instead.”

“Not all of us are fond of dark places,” Tanila stated as she ate oatmeal. “Still, we are grateful for the adventurer hall using their teleporter to send us that far away.”

“I’m sure if they could, they would have sent you to the other side of the great waters,” Batrire said. “We’ve had to return to wearing our disguise rings as walking through town without getting mobbed has been impossible. Rumors have it we’re all going to have statues made for the hall here in the capital.”

Unable to help it, Max grunted as he shook his head. “The gold one is bad enough. Now they want another?”

“Hey!” Fowl exclaimed, pounding the table with his hand. “Some of us need love too.”

Everyone started to laugh as Max rolled his eyes.

“Dear Ockrim,” he said pleadingly, “show me that you love me.”

All three women started to turn red, and they laughed so hard that Fowl gave Max a two-handed finger gesture.

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Each nodded and smiled as the other adventuring parties stepped aside, allowing them to enter the tower without waiting.

“Thank you!”

“Gods be with you!”

Others called out their praises for how they had defeated the army that had threatened to end the lives of everyone in the city.

Only a few elves were present, but each quickly dropped to both knees, bowing low as Tanila passed.

“Rise, you need not bow to me,” she said, stopping before one of them.

“But princess… you–”

“I am not my father. You need not fear me as I will not use the bond that compels you.”

It took a few seconds as the elven mage looked upward, her green eyes struggling to look at Tanila’s face.

“If you want to honor our people, continue to climb the tower and support your friends. Show the others that we are no different.”

A nod and sniff came from the woman as she hesitantly took Tanila's hand.

Max watched as she helped the elven woman stand and gave her a gentle squeeze on her arm.

She then turned and moved toward the tower portal, the rest of the party joining in behind her.

“Good luck today, and may the gods bless you,” one of the guards called out.

Max nodded and touched the shimmering surface, selecting the seventy-ninth floor as their destination.

The world shimmered and he felt a dry warmth against his skin.

His sonar detected nothing but flat areas around and when his eyes worked, they widened immediately.

“What in the gods…” Fowl muttered.

Each party member made a comment or sound as they took in the sight before them.

“Why… why does it have to look like this?” Cordellia asked.

Max shrugged as he stared at the walls, giant black caprices, each twenty feet long, fused together to form the outer area of the place where they had appeared.

They flowed upward to the ceiling, an absolute black color that would have plunged them into darkness if not for the rest of the tower floor.

Hundreds of glowing veins ran along the rocky base and Tanila bent down, examining the glowing orange substance.

“Amber… I think it’s amber.”

In the center of the dome, the boss floor was a glossy black rock of some kind.

“That looks like obsidian,” Max said as he frowned. “And those amber veins come from it but they’re a different color.”

“Red,” Cordellia answered. “They’re a darker red.”

“Lava?” Fowl asked. “It might explain the dry heat.”

A cough came from their healer as she tapped her staff against the hard rock. “Is it just me or does it feel like everything is… vibrating?”

Max nodded, knowing that their healer was right.

And the question is where is the boss?

It will likely come from the center of the floor, but I would be careful. There is an energy here that is… stronger than usual.

Stronger than what you're used to because you've missed so many tower floors?

Frustration flowed through their bond and Max almost smiled at pointing out the obvious.

Perhaps… yet it seems… different.

"So what's the plan?" Fowl asked as he cracked his neck and rotated both shoulders. "You going to go out there and see what big bad awaits us?"

"Only if you don't want to. I mean… according to Aerthen, you're the greatest dwarf she's ever met."

"Bah. You say that like it's not true!"

Glad they could always joke in moments like this, Max gave his friend a gentle pat on the shoulder before equipping his new shield, turning his weapon into a long spear.

"Be ready, I'll be back."

Every step he took as he walked away made a crunching sound, and as he stepped on the amber, Max could sense some sort of magical power from it.

What is that?

I'm not certain but it is giving off magical energy. It differs from those crystal lines on the other tower floors.

Wondering what else they might have to contend with as the spiderwork pattern of amber covered so much of the boss floor, Max continued moving toward the center of the room, ready to dash back to his friends if something appeared near them.

A hundred yards away from the completely black circle of stone in the middle, he realized it was jagged and not connected, and a rumbling began to take place.

The whole dome shifted and buckled, dust falling from the ceiling as the center of the floor separated. A long black object began to rise from it.

Slowly, a shape appeared, and Max started backing up. Finally, a black beetle arose completely, easily three stories tall and three times as long.

At the front of its head was a fifteen-foot-long pincer clacking together like a flat saw. Each time it closed, the sound was like thunder.

Thick chitin covered every bit of the creature as the horn on its head dipped down near the opening of its mouth.

That does not look like an easy nut to crack.

It turned slowly, locked its coal colored eyes on Max, and shrieked.

The entire room vibrated and Max covered both ears as waves of sound washed over him, making his intestines feel queasy.

As it took its first step towards him, the thick black leg crashed into the rock, shaking the nearby area.

I'll try to bash it, you hit it with spells!

Leaping into the air, Bob propelled them toward the insect, and Max easily flew past it. Thrusting his weapon against its outer shell, he watched as his spear bounced off.

Wind blades crashed against the same side, and soon an ice spear struck, neither of them doing any noticeable damage.

The boss turned in his direction, sending out shockwaves along the tower floor as it moved, causing another cloud of dust to descend from above.

Over and over, dozens of attacks bounced off as Max continued to assault the beetle.

He changed his weapon every few strikes, finding that no matter what kind he used it didn't do any damage.

An arrow ricocheted off near him, his sonar detecting it and hoping that the empowered boss arrow from Cordellia was just as useless.

Giant shards of ice began to fall from the storm Tanila had summoned and though each one was as big as Max, they broke against the outer shell.

What are we missing?

It's slow. Try hitting from beneath it. Use all your offensive skills, I'll reset them if need be.

With Bob's blessing to go all out, Max flew under the creature, easily avoiding its tree-like legs and used everything he had.

[Ultimate Form]

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

His body grew, and the power he struck with barely chipped the underside, leaving only a few small flakes of its shell.

He repeatedly pounded the same spot with a two-handed hammer, changing it to a pickaxe and then a spear, hoping to find a way to pierce and break through the section.

MOVE!

Max sensed the boss lowering itself to the ground as Bob called for him to escape.

He easily escaped the bulk that fell to the rock floor as it struck, seeing his friends all falling over from how the room buckled and shook due to the impact.

Racing to where they were, he helped them up and shook his head.

“What should we do? Everything is bouncing off it!”

“My arrow did nothing,” Cordellia said. “I didn’t even bother bringing out my summon after watching nothing work.”

“Both of our spells aren’t doing anything,” Tanila added. “It’s not fast, but I’m certain it will hurt if it does hit us.”

Watching the insect rise, Max frowned, unsure how he could hope to do anything to such an armored creature.

Let’s try the new spell. See what it does.

“Stay safe. Fowl, be ready. We might need you to take a hit and see what kind of damage your thorn aura might do,” Max called out as he moved away.

“You want me to let it hit me?!” Fowl shouted. “Didn’t you just hear Tanila?!”

Waving away the concern in his friend’s cry, Max lured the boss away from his friends.

[Heaven’s Storm]

Max almost choked upon seeing a fifth of his mana pool vanish as storm clouds gathered above the boss.

Seconds passed and then a boom came as it unleashed lightning strikes upon the top part of the beetle.

A small screech came from the insect but Max couldn’t see any damage as he flew over the boss after the spell ended.

Some spots looked scorched, but the outer shell was fine.

Flying higher, Max easily dodged the lumbering beast as it tried to rise, snapping at him with its long jaw appendage.

I guess we cast it again. Does that mean I’ll lose 20% of my total mana or current mana?

Well, it was almost 5%, so quadrupling it would mean 20%. Perhaps a few more points in intelligence would help with math problems. Still, only casting it again will tell us.

Max snorted at Bob joking during a moment like this. He could sense his skill was just as anxious as he was, unsure what kind of damage their new spell might do.

Well… here goes nothing…

Links

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[None]

[F7]44/513(1) Chapter 513 - Some Things are Hard

[F7]Next Chapter: yyyy-mm-dd-hh:mm

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[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2448778/chapter-513-some-things-are-hard; [F7]44/513(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:41],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:41],[Wayback_first2025-07-21 10:41],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-21 9:54],[this.word2025-07-21 12:59],[publish2025-07-19 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-19 16:00])Chapter 513 - Some Things are Hard - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 513 - Some Things are Hard

[Heaven’s Storm]

His mana pool felt the loss immediately as the storm that hadn’t dissipated above the boss grew darker and the air became noticeably colder.

Thunder rang out, matching the sound of the boss’s steps, right before bolts of blue lightning descended upon the insect.

Max could feel the electricity in the air, and his vision had afterimages of light. He tried to watch and not stare at the destruction being rained down upon the boss.

The storm assaulted the insect for thirty seconds, and when the last bolt struck, Max raced to see what it had accomplished.

What in the gods…

Barely more than a few darker areas… Quickly try to attack them!

Max moved as Bob directed him toward the areas of the chitin shell that looked worse for wear.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Ultimate Form]

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

All three attacks struck, causing a chip the size of his foot to come free, yet Max already knew this shell was much thicker.

Nothing… it did nothing.

He continued to hack at the same spot repeatedly, the rage of his berserker filling him as the boss bucked and moved beneath him, unable to attack the person on its back.

When his ability ended, Max shouted, upset and angry that no matter what he did, they couldn't cause any real harm.

We can't injure it, and I doubt it can catch us unless it has some ability that makes it considerably faster… I'm going to try using my dimensional vault.

Repositioning himself, Max moved to hover before the boss's face.

Those dark eyes seemed to radiate anger or something else, and it moved forward, the long black pincer opening and closing as it prepared to bite the pesky human in front of it.

[Dimensional Space]

[Dimensional Space - Blocked]

What the–

[Demonic Teleport]

The message surprised him, and Max had to teleport away to avoid getting caught in the pincers, having waited until the last moment to try to summon his vault.

How?

The tower learns… You cannot expect the same trick to work over and over. You were cheating in the eyes of it. One shouldn't have that kind of power.

Words came from Max's mouth that would earn him a lifetime of soap had children been present as he backed up, leading the boss toward the opposite side of the room.

Hovering near the large black shells that lined the two-hundred-high wall, Max felt his stomach and head hurting the closer the boss came.

Each step seemed to make the wall of fused shells vibrate, and he struggled to keep his eyes open, his Sonar skill suffering from some sort of vibration attack.

Flying upward and away, the sensation that had been assaulting him quickly vanished and Max shook his head, clearing the cobwebs that lingered inside.

The walls… they amplify its steps. The closer it got and with you between them… I would not try to fight it near them again.

You don't have to tell me twice. My head is still hurting.

Racing to his friends, Max landed and shook his head.

"That didn't look like it went as planned," Fowl said. "Are you serious about me letting myself get bit?"

Sighing, Max shook his head. "No… Even with all your defensive skills, I'm unsure how much damage it would do. But I'm also unsure how we can defeat this boss as we can't even pierce its protective layer."

Cordellia started to open her mouth, and Max waved her off.

"One second, I need to draw it away again."

After leading the boss away and giving them about fifteen seconds to talk, Max motioned for their ranger to continue.

"What if you do like the wurm? Go inside it? Avoid the outer shell?"

"Like the clockwork, boss?" Batrire asked.

Cordellia nodded. "Max is the only one who can survive that, and it would give him access to the softer insides."

Max groaned as everyone began to nod, luring the boss away, leaving them all there to discuss his potential move.

Upon arriving, Batrire cast her 25% stat increase buff and the individual one she had gained recently.

"I take it, you all decided I'm doing this," Max muttered. "Alright. Fowl be ready. When I'm gone, it may attack you all. Stay away from the walls, and just lure it away."

Max raced toward the boss without waiting for a reply, unsure how this might go.

Thoughts?

Aim for its mouth, phase inside it, get in its throat, and then we'll attack from there. Hopefully you'll be able to do something.

[Cooldowns Reset]

Max transformed his weapon into a curved sword and flew at the boss's open mouth.

It shrieked as he came near, closing its pincers as he flew toward the black opening.

[Phasing]

Having done this trick before, Max created a ball of flame, the light illuminating what his sonar told him was there.

A thick mucus covered its throat as he passed through the mouth full of teeth that seemed to grind like stones together. There would be no better spot to attack from as it was almost as wide as he was.

[Harden Body]

[Bulwark]

[Armored Warrior]

Curling up as tightly as possible, Max created stone and ice walls inside the warm pipe. It pushed the flesh apart and gave him space to unphase without seeing whose body would win the contest if being stronger.

The boss jerked as it began to choke on the two walls and Max felt the flesh starting to press down, crushing some of the walls as it did.

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

His weapon cut, digging into the flesh and splitting the windpipe with ease, causing blood to immediately appear, beginning to fill the cavity he was in.

Taking a deep breath, Max hacked away, recasting his walls before taking the next step.

It’s all yours after this.

[Ultimate Form]

The tearing sound that came as he grew signaled that the cut he had made had spread, and Bob began to take the next part as Max summoned his shield, forcing flesh upward with his left hand while his weapon continued to hack away.

Lighting arched through the boss’s body as wind blades flew in different directions.

They didn’t cut more than a few feet, but the nonstop barrage of them began to turn the area Max was in into a slurry of flesh and blood.

The boss bucked and shook repeatedly, causing Max's position to shift. Throughout it all, Bob kept them as stable as possible.

Stone, ice, fire, lightning, and wind assaulted every part of the soft tissue inside the hardened shell.

This way, hurry!

Max could sense the quickened pace of the boss.

Its flesh was trying to heal itself, but the barrage of spells inside it could not keep up.

[Cooldowns Reset]

Once again, Max used his defensive and offensive abilities as they carved a path through the boss, inching their way to where its heart was.

It took one more resetting of his skills to reach the organ as big as Max, and after the duo assaulted it with blade and magic, a cold sensation washed over him.

[Blink]

[Bonus Stats Consumed]

[100 Strength Consumed]

[150 Constitution Consumed]

[5 Abilities Consumed]

[No Ability Matches Entity Type]

[Power Stored for Future Use]

Gasping for air, Max tried to blink and see where he was, unable to until he summoned a towel and wiped away the gore that covered his face and entire body.

Thick black blood dripped everywhere as he hovered in mid-air over the boss.

You did it. Well done.

We did it. And… that stats… those skills… what–

A chuckle came, and then Max felt himself spinning like a top. Before asking why, he glanced down and saw that most of what had been covering him had been flung off.

I guess that's one way to do it.

For a moment, I had considered warning you, but… I figured, why not have some fun? We can talk later about the fight's gains. For now, they are waiting.

Laughing, Max shook his head as he descended towards his friends, glad that his skill and friend were back and continued to surprise him.

"Great plan," he said after touching down on the ground. "I'm sure I would have gotten there eventually."

Cordellia beamed at the praise, grinning from ear to ear. "Sometimes you just need a woman's opinion."

Fowl groaned and chuckles came from the other two.

"So… I'm guessing you didn't harvest anything?" their warrior asked.

"No… You?"

“Bah, I wasn’t going to be able to break off a piece of its shell. Still… I’m surprised the tower sent something so hard like that at us. How would one defeat that without your ability?”

Max shrugged and was about to reply when he noticed his friends' mouths start to open at the same time.

Turning around, he saw what they were looking at.

The giant beetle corpse was gone; instead, Chromie stood with its hand behind its back.

“Uh… where’s the chest?” Fowl whispered.

“Do not worry about the rewards,” the metallic being called out. “Come, we need to talk.”

The sound of his fingers snapping rang out, and a portal appeared, silver in color and just as tall as Chromie.

Max and the rest glanced at each other. Seeing that they had no other option and that the being could easily hear them from hundreds of yards away, they moved toward it.

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All five sat on the gold seats that had been present when they moved through the portal. Their host had taken his seat and was silent for a few seconds.

“I must congratulate you five on accomplishing a task that most cannot. The creature you faced is the first test to prepare for what is coming. Had you failed to defeat it, going any further would have been impossible, as what comes next will test you in ways like never before.”

“Wait, what?” Fowl asked. “What does that mean?”

“If you will give me a moment, I shall get there,” Chromie replied. “There is much to discuss and you need to learn to listen before asking questions.”

A snort came from their healer and ranger, leading to Fowl grunting as he crossed his arms.

“The next ten floors will be different than you can imagine. Every other floor will possess a boss. The floor before it will have an opportunity to trade and acquire things for that fight. You must decide what is worth trading for to help with the coming battles.

“Many things will be available for trade, and not all will be useful for the next fight, but some may have value in the coming ones if you continue to climb higher. Do you understand?”

Everyone looked at each other, and most had furrowed eyebrows or slight frowns.

“So you’re saying we will not be able to defeat the bosses unless we trade for the right items?” Tanila asked.

“No… though it will be easier to defeat them with the right tool, weapon or other item. I am saying there will be opportunities for you to acquire things you normally wouldn’t be able to acquire. Beyond that, I shall not say anything more as I am forbidden. Part of this journey is preparing for what comes next. You must learn the path of growth you desire. Choose one path and you may grow quickly yet falter later, falling behind or being lost forever. Another path may take you longer to grow, but it will lead to true success. Yet there are countless paths to travel and you must also learn to choose your own or be led down one by others.”

A groan came from their warrior as he rubbed his eyes. “Someone promise me you’ll tell me what he just said later.”

Trying not to laugh, Max tapped his chin.

Do you have any idea what he is talking about?

No… my memory of that is gone. What he says makes sense, though. I’m more interested in what we will face. I cannot imagine the power and potential things that can be gained. Our biggest concern should be what the tower prevents us from doing.

Like my dimensional space?

Exactly.

“I have a question,” Max said as he leaned forward. “Does the tower choose to block certain skills for any particular reason?”

The reflective face stared at him momentarily, and the metallic being shook after about ten seconds.

“I… cannot answer that question. The tower and the system do what they must. You must learn to work within the confines of what is allowed.”

“What about our rewards for the boss we just defeated?” Cordellia asked. “There wasn’t a treasure chest.”

“You and your dwarven friend are both alike,” Chromie replied. “It shall be given to you upon the arrival of the next tower floor. Fear not. You have earned a great reward.”

Max chuckled as their ranger and warrior both smiled at each other.

“I have one last thing to instruct you five on, and then it shall be time for you to venture forth. These next ten levels are nothing compared to what comes next. You must decide if defeating the tower and the next step after is what you desire.”

“Why is that?” Batrire asked.

Shaking his head, Chromie held up his hand.

“I cannot say more. Just know that in time, you will understand.”

Max started to open his mouth when the sound of two fingers snapping rang out and the world around him shifted.

Links

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[None]

[F7]45/514(1) Chapter 514 - Shopping for Something

[F7]Next Chapter: yyyy-mm-dd-hh:mm [this.info_date]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-6/chapter/2451417/chapter-514-shopping-for-something;
[F7]45/514(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:40],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-21 10:40],[Wayback_first2025-07-21 10:40],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-21 9:54],[this.word2025-07-21 13:19],[publish2025-07-20 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-20 16:00])Chapter 514 - Shopping for Something - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2],[L3]*/

Chapter 514 - Shopping for Something

The sounds of so many people talking filled Max’s ears as his sonar revealed nothing beyond the noise.

When his eyes finally worked, he felt himself straighten. He saw a large corridor made of purple-worked stone similar to his dimensional space that ran for half a mile.

At its end was a portal, but all along the walls were what appeared to be shops with tents and overhangs, each filled with items and different beings shouting out and talking to others who perused the goods before them.

“Max… are we in some… bazaar?” Cordellia asked.

“Who cares,” Fowl said, clapping his hands together. “Look, over here!”

Behind them was a portal and a small wooden chest.

“Seems… a bit tiny,” Tanila stated before groaning as Fowl opened his mouth.

“Don’t!” Batrire snapped. “Just open it and let it go.”

Groaning, their warrior moved to the chest and lifted the lid, suddenly doing a little jig before turning and motioning for them all to come close.

“Ockrim does love me!” he exclaimed.

Inside the swirling purple vortex were five potions, each of which usually gave close to a hundred points spread out across all their stats. Next to it were two items that needed to be rolled for. There was a ring for Tanila, Batrire, Fow,l and Cordellia. Max was the only one with something different, a black chain chest piece.

“Oh baby… I just want to touch it,” their warrior said as he glanced at the others. “May I?”

Their healer rolled her eyes, and Max motioned for the dwarf to go ahead.

Laughter came as Fowl held up the black band and slipped it on his finger. “Oh… I think I’ll call you my precious.”

“Not going to share?” Cordellia asked as the dwarf reached in and retrieved his potion.

“Uh… if you share yours, I’ll share mine.”

Sighing, their ranger reached in and took hers. A tooth-displaying smile quickly appeared as she also put the black band on her finger.

“Sharing?” Fowl asked.

With a shake of her head, their ranger's grin grew as she took the potion that was hers out.

“Now I can’t wait,” Batrire muttered.

Both she and Tanila reached in, and each started to laugh, putting the ring on and smiling at Max.

Grunting, Max frowned as he studied the four of them, all grinning like a cat who caught a mouse.

“I guess I’ll have to pry it out later from Tanila.”

“Bah, that’s cheating,” Fowl replied. “Still, it’s a pretty nice item.”

Retrieving his chest piece, Max studied the scales, which looked like tiny black pieces of chitin armor, and held it up, admiring it for a few seconds.

[Inspect Chest]

*****

Black Beetle Chitin Armor

+20% to All Stats

+20% to Physical and Magical Attacks

*****

After swapping it out for his old piece, Max couldn’t help but appreciate how it looked and how it made him feel. The power of the bonus stats was almost intoxicating, so he did a quick twirl to show it off.

“Going to share?” Fowl asked.

“Nah, I don’t think so.”

Ignoring Tanila's glance, he took the potion and the three large pink crystals and motioned to the chest.

“Two items, you all should roll on them,” Max said.

“You’re not going to roll?” Cordellia asked. “That chest piece is that good?”

Shaking his head, he pointed his thumb at the bazaar behind them.

“I’m going to go see what’s for sale. You four figure out who gets what.”

Spinning on his heels, Max walked off as he stored his potion and approached the first tent shop.

“WELCOME!” shouted a small demon about the size of a grapefruit. The little red and orange creature hovered behind a stone table, motioning at the three items before it. “Does anything strike your fancy?”

Max tried not to smile too much, as the demon’s low-pitched voice didn’t match his body. Instead, he chose to focus on the three objects before him.

One was a potion that almost seemed alive, with red liquid moving around it, sloshing up and down the sides. Next to it was a rainbow-colored gem the size of his fist. The last item was a dagger that was so black it almost seemed to absorb light.

“Uh… what are they?

“A good question and an even better answer! I am Foop, and before you is a potion so rare, every demon would kill their own mother for it!”

“Wouldn’t every demon do that already?” Max asked.

“Yes, but they would gladly do it now!” Foop exclaimed. “Inside is the blood of an archdemon. The power it contains and its potential uses are endless for those who practice the greatest arts in the system!”

“Demonic magic?”

“Exactly!”

Snorting, Max pointed at the next item.

“Ahh, a keen eye indeed! That there is a rainbow gem, only able to be harvested by blind leprechauns from triple rainbows when the planets align! So rare that I can promise you only two exist in all the systems!”

Blind leprechauns? What kind of idiot does this demon take you for?

Probably an absolute idiot… I mean… he's the first vendor in all this. I'm wondering how he got so lucky to get this spot.

"And what about the dagger?"

Hissing, the demon flew closer, glancing both ways before holding a hand up to its mouth and whispering.

"A borgurom blade. Very deadly. One scratch can end the life of many creatures. Sadly its last owner cut themself… and that is how I came to acquire it."

"What did you find?" Fowl asked as the others came close.

"Friends of yours?" Foop asked.

"Brother, actually," Max replied, bending down and looking at the three items again.

"Brother? But–"

"Different mother and father. Now, how do I know these are all what you say they are?"

Grabbing his leathery red chest, Foop let out a gasp as if someone had stabbed him.

"It pains me that you think I would lie and try to cheat you! Out of all the merchants here, I am the one you can trust! That is why I am granted this first spot."

Max's sonar picked up laughter and chuckles from some of the other vendors. He could feel the ones who didn't have someone before their shop watching and studying them.

"Hmm… let me check that theory," Max said as he pulled a dagger out.

Foop flew back a little bit.

"Sir… violence here is prohibited. To do so would–"

Ignoring the demon, Max plunged the dagger into his own arm.

[Demonic Summoning]

The prismatic world appeared and the same great set of grotesque doors slowly opened, revealing a bustling hall of demons with Sog'thollech striding toward it.

"Max! Is it time for…" The demon's words trailed off as he saw what was around the one who had summoned him. "A system shop? You're in a system-sponsored trading floor?!"

"Apparently," Max replied, holding out his hand and shaking it when his demon friend took it. "I'm trying to make sure I don't get taken by this little demon selling me stuff or any others."

Peering through the crystal wall, Sog'thollech let out a laugh.

“That’s an imp… not a demon… I’m almost offended, but then again… you wouldn’t know. Still, the fact you’ve reached one of these is impressive. Can you give me a moment, and then I’ll be ready to assist.”

Nodding, Max watched as Sog’thollech turned and moved back through the doors, shouting orders that sent the other demons who had been watching scurrying.

“Okay, I’m ready. I just needed to make sure what I ordered gets done.”

“You look good, Sog. Real good. Have you… grown again?”

Pounding his black chest, the demon smiled and nodded.

“That coin you gave me… was worth more than we realized. Let’s just say I grow stronger daily, and I have you to thank for that.”

“Well, thank me by helping me with this imp.”

As the prismatic walls shattered and Foop’s eyes saw the demon suddenly standing beside Max, it started to shrink slightly.

“Ma… master… how… how can I help you today?”

Gone was the deep voice, replaced by one that sounded almost childlike.

“Tell me, little one. What are you selling?”

Red eyes darted between Sog’thollech and Max, its tiny chin quivering slightly.

“Uh… a potion of unending flatulence, a gem of hair coloring, and a borgurom blade,” Foop replied, wincing as he spoke.

“Well one of out three was true,” Max said. “The borgurom blade. Is it any good?”

His demon friend’s head bobbed side to side.

“Useful but only once. They bestow a nasty curse when they cut something, dissolving and entering the creature or person’s body. I wouldn’t care if you cut me with it, as that would do nothing to me but to others… it would be troublesome.”

“How much?” Max asked.

“What do you have to trade?” Foop asked, clearing his throat, the deep voice returning.

Rubbing his eyes, Max turned to his friend. “What do imps like?”

“Gold, blood, magical equipment, sweets, bone–”

“Sweets?”

Not seemingly upset that Max had interrupted him, Sog nodded.

Summoning two different boxes, Max carefully set them on the stone counter.

“Now…what I have in here is beyond rare,” Max said as he tapped the two cardboard lids. “There were only twelve in our entire world until I traded a few to a dragon for some scales.”

“Bah that’s a load of urphormus shite!” the sprite exclaimed, spitting to the side. “No dragon would–”

When the gold scale appeared in his hand, the noise in the bazaar stopped, and the imp’s mouth froze.

“I’ll TAKE IT!” Foop shouted.

“I’m sorry the scale isn’t an option.”

“Who cares about the scale!” the imp exclaimed. “I want to know what a dragon would trade for one!”

“It’s going to cost you,” Max stated as he grimaced. “All three of them for one.”

“No!” Foop declared. “Just one, you can–”

Max opened the box and pulled out a lemon surprise cupcake. The candied lemon peel glistened with the sugar, and the scent immediately began to spread.

“Ah… yeah you see, these are so rare that it wasn’t just one dragon scale she gave… but three.”

Max thought the imp’s eyes were going to fall out as he started to stack gold scales upon the stone counter.

You are a shrew liar… I knew I liked you.

Laughter filled his head as the imp kept glancing between the scales and the cupcake Max was starting to put into the box.

“Fine! All three! I’ll take it!”

Sucking air in through his teeth, Max grimaced as he stored the scales again.

“I’m not sure… maybe I should see what others might offer me for one.”

Flying until he was only a foot from Max’s face, Foop clasped his tiny hands together.

“All three and… I’ll… give you an Imps pass!”

Suddenly, a metallic black card appeared in the creature's tiny hands.

Glancing at Sog, Max had to keep himself from smiling as the demon’s eyes widened and he nodded.

Sighing, he waited a few seconds before shrugging.

“I guess. Those three items and the imps pass for one of these.”

“Trade confirmed!” Foop exclaimed as he held out a tiny hand.

Putting his finger out there, they shook, and Max felt the cupcake leave his hand, floating toward the imp whose smile almost took up its whole face.

“Come to daddy,” Foop whispered as he ran a finger through the yellow frosting.

A moan that made Max uncomfortable escaped the little imp as he shuddered upon licking his finger.

“Uh… yeah, thanks for ruining my appetite,” Cordellia said.

Storing the box with eight cupcakes remaining, Max carefully picked up the dagger and stored it along with the other two items.

Tanila shook her head, biting her lip as she smiled at him.

“You’re so bad… not that I mind of course,” she whispered into his ear.

“Perhaps I should bake more often,” he replied.

Links

//[2025-07-21 13:19]

[L1] https://i.postimg.cc/ncXyBb6c/gif-cover.gif

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/124797/land-grab-an-incremental-kingdom-building-fantasy

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/124797

[L4] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/124797/land-grab-an-incremental-kingdom-building-fantasy/chapter/2435600/drowning-in-the-ebil

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[F7]46/515(1) Chapter 515 - Harder Foes, Small Trinkets

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-07-21 16:00 [2025-07-21 12:45] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2454080/chapter-515-harder-foes-small-trinkets; [F7]46/515(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-22 12:52],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-22 12:52],[Wayback_first2025-07-22 12:52],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-22 12:50],[this.word2025-07-22 12:53],[publish2025-07-21 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-21 16:00])Chapter 515 - Harder Foes, Small Trinkets - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2]*/

Chapter 515 - Harder Foes, Small Trinkets

“So… it appears you’re a master not only at fighting but also at trading,” Sog’thollech said. “Tell me, Max, is there anything you’re not good at?”

“Being humble,” Fowl interjected, causing everyone to laugh.

“Thanks again,” Max said as he shook his head. “I couldn’t have done what I did without your help.”

Snorting, the demon shook his head as a portal appeared behind him.

“We all know that’s a lie. After you bamboozled that imp and how he acted, every other merchant in that place was ready to offer their firstborn or soul for what you showed.”

The demon waved and stepped into the portal, vanishing instantly.

“He’s right,” Cordellia said as they stood in the bubble of silence that the item Max was using created. “I wouldn’t have believed it myself if I hadn’t witnessed you talk two merchants into haggling against each other. How many items did we get?”

“Seventy-three,” Tanila answered. “Seventy-three different things, most of which we have no clue what they do.”

“They have to have some purpose,” Batrire said. “After all, Chromie was pretty specific about needing items for whatever comes next.”

“But a gem of hair coloring?” Fowl asked. “I mean.. Are we going to have to change the color of some boss’s hair to kill it? Or what about the indestructible brick? What would happen if someone threw it really fast at Max’s gorgon shield? I mean… who or where do these things come from?”

Unable to help himself, Max laughed as he shook his head. “That’s a pretty unique thought… The real question we must ask is, do we face the boss right now or go home?” Max said. “I’m up for either.”

“Why not?” their warrior replied.

The other three shrugged, and Max pointed at the portal at the end of the hall.

“Guess I’ll go first.”

***

“Uh… this can’t be good,” Batrire said as everyone looked around the boss's floor.

A large, almost circular area of white stone and sand filled the tower floor, but she and everyone else were looking at the drop-off near where they had appeared.

Fowl tossed a rock over the edge and grunted as it fell, disappearing into the darkness below.

“Is this a floating island?” Cordellia asked. “I mean… I’ve heard of only one in all my studying, but this… is crazy.”

Max’s sonar could feel everyone’s heartbeats pounding as they moved away from the edge, gazing across the mass of land they were on and toward the boss on the other side.

“I can’t determine what the boss looks like,” he said. “Cordellia, can you use your ability and check it out?”

Their ranger nodded and blinked a few times, staring at what they would face.

“Maybe thirty feet or more tall, and it looks made of stone and… glass? Something is swirling around in its chest. It also has a pretty big sword. Like a golem but not as blocky, while also not being that lifelike.”

“So tank and spank?” Fowl asked.

“I doubt that,” Tanila said as she began pulling items out of her storage that they had picked up from the bazaar. “Something in here should be useful. Anyone else got ideas?”

“Well no hair and I’m guessing it doesn’t have a mouth,” their warrior replied. “So the potion and gem are out.”

“Doubt the dagger is any good either,” Max replied, setting out items like Tanila had.

Dozens of small trinkets that didn’t appear to have value in a boss fight were on one side. Over a dozen weapons were in the middle. Some potions and other consumables as well as crafting items, were next to the weapons and finally large items that had been acquired were at the end of their collection.

“Maybe we should have gone home and done more research,” Batrire said as she picked up a potion and inspected it. “I’m not sure we need a potion of tail growing.”

“A broken bell the size of a dwarf, two petrified wooden beams, a rusty anchor and chain, two chairs that have six legs, a large mirror, and a glass boat,” Cordellie listed as she looked at the larger items. “Someone sure got the better end of the deal out of all our trades.”

“What about that hammer that glows?” Fowl asked, pointing at it. “Think it might do something when you hit the boss with it?”

Lifting the weapon in question, Max inspected it again.

[Inspect Hammer]

*****

Hammer of Echos

Track enemies by hearing past movements.

Striking stone reverts many things to their original form.

*****

The thick leather wrapped around the shaft smelled… almost like old parchment. It hummed slightly in his hands, larger than a typical crafting one. The hammer head was of a crystal of some kind with lines and veins of pink metal he didn't recognize.

"Maybe… but I think it's more for crafting," Max replied. "I'm not sure it would survive smashing into a boss. The problem is each of these items has different qualities and they make sense, I guess, but some are weird like that hair coloring gem."

"A bell that absorbs sound and a mirror that doesn't reflect anything," Tanila said. "Or how about an anchor that holds no matter what or a glass boat that doesn't float?"

Batrire chuckled as she tapped the large boat. "Seems kind of stupid, but it might look good over one's table at the Faction house."

"I got a belt that comes undone when one says 'twister' and a pair of gloves that can't grip anything," Fowl stated as he held up the two items. "Almost as good as the box that blob of… slime? Or was it jello? Either way, who doesn't love a box you can put something into, and it's gone forever."

"Only if it's smaller than six by six inches," Cordellia said. It's too bad we can't fit your head into it."

Max ignored the two as they gestured and made faces, picking up the last pieces and storing them.

"Are you sure you want to fight this without knowing what anything does?" Tanila asked. "We could still leave and come back later."

Shaking his head, Max glanced at the others, who had stopped talking and were listening to the conversation.

"We only have two more escape crystals. Yes, we can get another one or two from Everett or another Faction, but I'd prefer not to waste them unless it's a real emergency. What you're talking about right now is like that first boss we faced in the tower."

Cordellia grunted and nodded her head once. "He's right. We're not going down that road again."

Max could see the concern on Tanila's face and tried to read her as she bit her lip.

"What's wrong? What has you so worked up?"

She took a deep breath and sighed. "The warning… the one Chromie gave us… just how bad are these next floors going to be that the tower gives a warning? I mean… can you even really imagine how strong what we will face must be?

"That last boss was impossible to damage. I'm not sure any other person could have done what you did. I mean, maybe, but then you're trying to time getting past its mouth and into its throat. Who thinks about stuff like that?"

“We do,” Fowl muttered. “But I hear what you’re saying. Trust me… I get it. I wasn’t looking forward to getting chomped on or stepped on just to see if I could do damage.”

“You all need to knock it off,” Batrire said, clapping her hands twice. “This is beginning to sound depressing. We’re on the 80th floor in the tower. The 80th floor! None of this will be easy, yet we all know we can’t stop. Especially after what happened last week.”

Nods came from everyone as Max considered what they were saying.

Your healer is right. Now is not the time to be afraid. Let’s see what the tower throws at us. We are so close to completing this and moving on.

Max snorted as Bob weighed in.

I'm glad to have you back… It was hard not having you, and not just because I didn’t learn any skills!

A chuckle came from inside, and he found himself grinning.

“Bob and Batrire are right. We need to keep going. Tanila and Batrire can be ready to use an escape gem if we need, but right now there is only one path and it’s through that boss.”

As Max pointed toward what they needed to face, he equipped his weapon and shield.

“Let’s buff up. We’ll find out what it does and then try to figure out what we acquired in the bazaar might be useful,” he said, cracking his neck. “Anyone can yell out something, and we’ll give it a go. Even the hair coloring gem.”

Fowl grinned and rotated his shoulders. “Let’s do this. I’m ready for whatever comes next.”

The sound of wood on metal rang out as their healer struck their warrior in the head.

Laughing, Max waited until they were buffed and then took the lead, moving quickly across the white stone and sand, making sure everyone got some distance from the edge.

Halfway across the island, a ticking sound came, and the boss charged at him, the large sword held back, ready to attack.

Thoughts?

Get bigger. We’ll need the size and stats for sure. Let’s see what it can do.

[Ultimate Form]

Doubling in size, Max held up his shield, preparing to block the incoming swing when his sonar went crazy.

[Demonic Teleportation]

The blade passed through where he had been, not from the front but from the back as the boss vanished from in front of him and then was directly behind. Inside its chest the white sand rotated like a cyclone, glowing slightly as it attacked.

A frost nova radiated around him, and the boss moved through it, not appearing to suffer any movement impairment at all.

White blocks of stone rose from the ground as Bob sent them at the glass portions of the boss. Each attack was shrugged off as the stones crumbled against it.

Racing to where the boss was, Max moved at its legs, slamming his sword into the stone leg.

A small chip came from the impact and it radiated through his arm.

Dodging and weaving, Max continued attacking, the occasional one getting through as the boss parried and used its stone hand to block his strikes.

Every spell Bob sent at it only managed to take off small pieces of stone.

His allies began sending spells and arrows, and Max winced as Cordellia sent in her purple pet wolf. It had tried biting down on the stone foot, doing no damage, receiving a kick to the side, and dissolving into a purple cloud.

Mid-swing, Max felt his sonar go haywire again.

[Blink]

Even with him moving twenty yards away, the boss did as well, the second he appeared, its oversized sword slamming into his shield.

[Regeneration]

Somehow, it sent him tumbling, covering a good hundred yards, the sword coming at him again.

[Armored Warrior]

[Bulwark]

The pain in his arm had started to lessen as his healing skill took over, yet blocking the boss’s attack again made them go numb for a second.

Blow after blow rained down upon him, and Max stood there, unable to attack back as the golem’s attacks seemed to speed up, matching something similar to his rampage or quick attack.

What is it doing? What do we do?!

Bob didn’t reply, instead using their new spell.

[Personal Barrier]

The boss's next attack struck it, emitting a flash of light as it continued to assault Max’s newest defense.

The sand in its chest! Look!

Max ignored the attacks with a little breathing space, letting his barrier absorb them and studying what Bob had pointed out.

The sand moved faster, changing colors, turning bright orange and swirling like a top.

Does it–

The boss vanished and an attack came from behind.

Max spun around, blocking the strike with his barrier and shield, and saw that the sand had spun the other way for a moment before returning to its normal direction.

What do we do?

Try to figure out what item will help here! You can't keep this barrier up forever!

Links

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[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/125681-shackled-destiny-epic-fantasy-found-family.jpg?time=1753098977

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/125681/shackled-destiny-epic-fantasy-found-family

[L3]

[F7]47/516 Chapter 516 - Praying Something Works

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-22 16:00 [2025-07-22 12:56]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2456809/chapter-516-praying-something-works;
[F7]47/516(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-23 10:36],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-23 10:36],[Wayback_first2025-07-23 10:36],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-23 9:38],[this.word2025-07-23 10:39],[publish2025-07-22 16:00],
[this.Last_edit2025-07-22 16:00])Chapter 516 - Praying Something Works - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 516 - Praying Something Works

Max grunted as the boss let out a salvo of attacks, the giant sword moving so fast it was almost a blur for even him.

Twice now the barrier had broken, his shield stopping the attack as it rained down strikes that would crush most people.

Another attack came, and as the blade was about to connect with the bone shield, the image of the boss blurred, its weapon passing through his defenses.

The golem’s blade passed through his torso, cutting him in half.

Pain flared up as the attack wounded him in a way that Max had never experienced.

[Regeneration]

As soon as the attack connected, Bob threw up every barrier they had, renewing the Personal Barrier one.

More strikes came, each hacking Max into pieces as his left arm was removed. The blade of the boss looked like a faded image as it slashed.

Pieces of him fell to the sand and stone, and as quickly as it started, six more attacks had been sent, two of them taking off both arms.

Unable to cry out as his hitpoints plunged two-thirds, Max couldn’t believe what came next.

Where…

A heal came, and the agony of organs and bones regrowing with muscle was blocked out as his overgrown body began regrowing everything from the waist down to both arms.

“Max!” Fowl shouted, running toward him.

Flesh and bone rejoined, and as it did, he found himself naked below the belt. His protective chest had repaired itself, covering his arms as before.

“Uh…”

Not concerned about his attire, Max spun, and his new arms and legs lifted him to his feet.

Able to turn, he saw the boss standing where it had started, light radiating off it as the sand in its chest spun backward.

“I thought… You were going to die!” Fowl exclaimed, coming to stand beside him. “How–”

Grabbing his cleaved-off bottom half, Max stored it and felt the items appear in his inventory. A moment later, he was fully clothed. Another second had both arms placed inside, and Max’s shield and rings returned to their original position.

“The weapon passed through my shield like it wasn’t even there,” Max replied. “We need to think fast. What can we use on it?!”

Seconds later, he was back to full health and shrugging off a wound most would have never recovered from.

“You got that hammer!” Cordellia shouted. “Try it?!”

Grunting, Max shrugged as he watched the swirling orange vortex of magic radiating around the boss begin to lessen.

“I’ve got to be able to hit it and not have it blinking around!”

A few seconds of silence followed, and Batrire shouted, “Use the anchor? See if it will hold!”

After retrieving the anchor from storage, he studied it with the attached twenty-yard chain. Small rings no bigger than his hand were connected to an anchor about four feet long.

It might work… It depends on the magic of all this.

Max grunted and inspected it.

[Inspect Item]

*****

Anchor of Grounding

Retrieved from the famous pirate, Dirk the Pirate, this anchor can hold any object in place.

*****

That is the stupidest description ever.

Blame the tower, not me. And who is Dirk the Pirate?

Beats me.

“Uh, Max,” Fowl said, backing up. “Whatever’s happening, we need to be ready! If this works, I’ll taunt and try to buy you an opening!”

Nodding as his friend moved away, Max began pouring mana into an air spear. Bob started to form wind blades, making them grow larger than usual.

The ground shook, and everyone saw dust rising from the island's edges.

“Did part of it just fall off?!”

Unable to answer Batrire's question, Max focused on the boss as it ran forward like it had the first time, sword out and ready to attack.

[All Cooldowns Reset]

[Ultimate Form]

It’s not even damaged. All the wounds we inflicted are gone. This… might be a time golem.

Tons of questions raced through Max’s mind, and he had to ignore them as the boss closed the gap in just a few seconds, sword coming at him again. The sand in its chest changed direction momentarily, and it vanished.

Like before, his sonar notified him that the boss had blinked again, attacking from behind.

[Demonic Teleportation]

Having guessed right, Max appeared next to the golem’s back leg, swinging the anchor around the thick stone leg and watching as the chain lengthened, connecting with itself.

A long metal spike appeared on the end of the chain and without hesitating, he slammed it into the ground.

[Blink]

The boss’s sword came where he had been, barely missing him, but its left leg was stuck as it tried to move.

Max pulled out his sword, preparing to charge the boss, when he saw the sand reverse course. Yet nothing happened.

It raised its weapon, preparing to attack the chain around its leg but the massive blade changed course as Fowl called out.

“TAUNTING!”

A loud clang of metal upon metal sounded, and chunks of rock and glass fell from the boss as its sword struck their warrior.

Fowl stood there, health dropping only ten percent.

Go! Its chest!

The wind blades and the ice spear slammed into the back of the golem’s stone head, taking off a few more chunks.

Faster than the blink of an eye, Max was at the boss’s chest, hovering as he swung, his weapon transformed into a giant pickaxe.

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Berserker]

[Rampage]

His modified weapon struck one of the cracks caused by Fowl's reflective damage, shattering the thick defenses as the weak point grew.

Before him, the sand spun clockwise, turned orange, and continued to injure itself, delivering blow after blow at their warrior.

Each strike was masterfully deflected and blocked by Fowl, his shield skill allowing him to negate a large portion of the damage that would usually be transferred.

Chunks of white stone flew from the impact as the sword raked off the shield and into the ground.

He had to dance with the boss as it swung its sword, staying close enough to strike without getting caught in its attack.

Each attack caused its own body to splinter and crack more. The glass section Max was chipping away at began forming a large crevice, and a few pieces of orange sand began to spill out from it.

[All Cooldowns Reset]

Again!

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Rampage]

Max attacked the growing fissure, sand now spilling out like a bucket full of water with multiple holes in it.

Arrows constantly struck the other sections of the boss’s chest, targeting weak points near his chest, and a giant ice spear appeared in his sonar, causing Max to dodge right to avoid being caught in its path.

Shattering glass rang out as the spell connected and the wedge of ice lodged itself in the fissure.

“BIG HEAL!”

Fowl’s health had dipped to less than 50% as the boss had picked up speed, its sword coming quicker and quicker.

Inside the golem's glass chest, Max could see an orange glowing shard at the center of where the sand had been swirling.

Hit it!

[All Cooldowns Reset]

Knowing Bob was spending power like it wasn’t anything, Max didn’t hesitate.

His weapon transformed into a long spear, able to penetrate through the fissure of its chest.

[Magical Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Rampage]

It connected against the glowing shard, causing an explosion of force and magical power in every direction.

[Personal Barrier]

Glass and stone impaled his body, the power that was unleashed was able to penetrate and destroy a section of his new ability.

[Regeneration]

Shards and chunks of the boss fell to the tower floor, gashes and chunks taken out from the golem's attacks.

Breathing heavily, he turned and saw that his friend was still standing. The area around Fowl was littered with stone and glass.

Tanila and the other two were all hunkered down behind barriers, pieces of the boss having been sent further past his friends.

Landing on the ground, he went to Fowl and gave his dwarven brother a pat on the shoulder.

"Nice work. Way to take one for the team."

"Bah… even with Batrire healing me, I can't imagine the pain you felt when it… tore you apart. Even with all my skills, every blow still made my bones and joints hurt."

The other three started moving toward them.

"So… what skills did you get?" Fowl asked.

Blinking, Max realized there hadn't been a sensation of cold.

"Mother of a goblin humpin ogre," Max cursed. "I didn't get anything."

All that power spent and nothing in return. Perhaps the tower is playing with us, having the first boss be one that gives us nothing for our troubles.

"What's wrong?" Cordellia asked as the three women arrived. "You two look like you sucked on a whole barrel of lemons."

"The boss… I didn't get anything from the kill."

He saw each of the women wince as they heard his statement.

"Still… that does look like a pretty good size chest over there," Batrire said, pointing behind him and Fowl.

Max spun and saw where she had motioned, laughing when Fowl let out a whistle and immediately sprinted toward the glass chest.

"Oh no, you don't!" Cordellia shouted, easily catching up with their warrior as the two raced across the white sand and stone floor, appearing to have forgotten about the fight less than a minute ago.

“Those two,” their healer muttered. “We better hurry up and see what’s there or they might roll on something without us.”

Nodding, Max took Tanila’s hand and lifted it, kissing it once.

“You okay?” she asked. “Cordellia's right; you look a bit upset.”

“It’s just all that power Bob used to keep us alive… and nothing in return.”

“Nothing? Have you seen the size of that chest?!”

Unable to help himself, Max smiled as Tanila winked at him.

“You’re right. We all know how much I love–”

“Stop…”

Tugging her gently, Max laughed, pulling her toward the glass chest the other three were already inspecting.

Up close, it left him in awe of how the tower had managed to carve and etch the boss in the side, an immense floating island and a speck of orange at the center of the golem's chest.

“It’s bigger than any of the others,” Cordellia stated. “I mean, by at least three feet.”

Fowl and Batrire already had a stool out next to it, the edge at about five feet from the ground.

“I might need to borrow one of those,” Max joked as he motioned to his friend. “Why don’t you give it a go and see if you can lift it.”

“Bah!” Fowl replied, smiling as he shoved upward with both hands, revealing a new color inside.

“It’s grey,” their healer said.

“Who cares! Look at all that loot!” Cordellia exclaimed.

Peering inside with the rest revealed that their ranger was right.

There were five items to be rolled on, three large grey crystals and a stat potion for each of them.

What had all of their attention though was the glass colored equipment for each of them.

All three women had a pair of earrings waiting for them. Fowl had a glass ring, while Max had a glass belt.

“What, no princess shoes?” Fowl asked as he winked at him. “Surely every princess needs a pair of glass shoes.”

A low thunk sounded as their healer smacked their warrior in the head, yet the grin on Fowl’s lips never vanished.

“So… how we want to do this?” Max asked. “Everyone goes at the same time or…”

“I think that works,” Tanila replied. “The real question is, what about the five things we all need to roll on? They’re all blacked out.”

Nodding, Max pointed at their warrior.

“Fowl can go first. If someone gets something better, we can tease him about it later.”

Laughter came as their warrior reached in and touched one of the five random objects.

“You all laugh now, but I’m not waiting if that’s the case.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]48/517(1) Chapter 517 - Loot Time

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-07-23 16:00 [2025-07-23 9:41] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2459513/chapter-517-loot-time;[F7]48/517(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-23 16:25],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-23 16:25],[Wayback_first2025-07-23 16:25],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-24 11:38],[this.word2025-07-24 11:43],[publish2025-07-23 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-23 16:00])Chapter 517 - Loot Time - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

/*[L1],[L2]*/

Chapter 517 - Loot Time

Fowl’s hand trembled as he held a sun-colored potion. It glowed in his hands, and everyone was silent, shocked at what they saw.

“Is that… really one of them?” Cordellia whispered.

“Yeah… I… I didn’t expect this,” their warrior replied, his voice almost unable to be heard. “One is unheard of in the lifetime of an adventurer. But two?”

“Well, stop standing around and drink it,” Max said, patting his friend on the shoulder. “Let’s see what you get!”

Hitting his friend on the shoulder seemed to jar Fowl out of his daze. The dwarf opened the potion and downed the drink, smacking his mouth a few times.

“Still tastes like my mom’s stew…”

The dwarf jerked, mouth open, as a ray of light shot out from it for a second.

Everyone waited as his eyes widened, large tears forming as his whole body shook.

Dropping to his knees, Fowl clasped both hands and uttered a prayer. “Ockrim… thank you.”

As the seconds ticked by and no other words came from their warrior who knelt there in the white sand, their ranger finally spoke up.

“Okay, now I need to know. What is it?!”

Snorting, Fowl wiped his wet cheeks with the back of his hands and smiled.

“Something that… I’d never… imagined.”

Their warrior kept getting choked up, so Max handed him a water flask.

After Fowl took a big swing from it, he grunted and stood.

“In our legends, there are–”

“Who cares about stories, just tell me the damn skill!” Batrire exclaimed. “You’re making me jealous already!”

Laughing, he nodded.

“It’s the skill *Ockrim’s Chosen* .”

Batrire and Tanila both gasped, and Max was glad he wasn’t alone in not knowing anything about it. Cordellia looked at him with the same confused expression.

“Ockrim’s Chosen… on you?”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Fowl asked, frowning at Tanila.

“I mean… nothing… just… you’re not royalty. For you to have that… could cause problems in the dwarven kingdom.”

“Well it’s not like I’m going to flaunt it… I mean not for a while,” Fowl said with a wink.

Batrire moved forward, her hand trembling as she grabbed his beard and pulled him close.

“You will never tell anyone about it unless we’re directly asked. Do you hear me?”

Nodding as best as he could, their warrior slid his hands into their healer's armpits and lifted her up, twirling her around and laughing.

“So… does anyone mind if I go next?” Cordellia asked.

Max and the other nodded, and their ranger selected one of the four remaining items to be rolled on. When the timer counted down and only her face was present, a tiny skill stone sat in her hand.

“What the…” she said, staring at the purple, white, and orange swirled stone.

“What skill is it?” Max asked, noticing everyone else's raised eyebrows.

“It doesn’t say.”

“Well, crush it,” Fowl said.

Their ranger nodded and squeezed tightly. Light erupting from between her fingers was almost too bright to look at for a moment.

Orange, purple, and white tendrils of magic wrapped around her arms and raced to cover her entire body in a cocoon of power.

Cordellia gasped as the magic grew thicker and surrounded her, blocking out every inch of her.

It crystallized and hardened, leaving their ranger encased in a glass prison shaped like herself.

“Do we–”

“No,” Tanila said, cutting Fowl off. “Leave it.”

“But she can’t breathe, can she?”

“I don’t think it matters,” she replied, moving a few steps closer toward Cordelllia.

Seconds passed, and then, after almost half a minute had gone by and nothing had happened, Max began to get anxious.

“Tanila–”

“No… trust it. Whatever this is, I’ve never seen or heard of it, but I doubt we’re facing something harmful. The tower wouldn’t do that.”

Their mage’s voice seemed certain, and Max could feel a slight vibration from the crystal cocoon.

“So we wait?” he asked.

“Nothing else to do,” their mage replied. “In the meantime, why not let Batrire get hers?”

Their healer climbed onto her step stool and leaned in, touching one of the remaining unknown objects.

An elixir that looked like pure gold appeared in her hand, and she frowned.

“Fitzbitz Ultimate Elixer?”

She glanced at Tanila and Max, and both shrugged.

“What’s it say when you identify it?” Fowl asked, leaning in to study the prize Batrire had won.

“That’s it. Nothing else.”

“Well then, drink up,” their warrior said. “Who wouldn’t want to be the ultimate one?”

Groaning, Batrire glanced at where Cordellia was still encased and then at Tanila.

“You think it will be okay if I drink this? What if something happens and she needs a heal and I can’t help because it's done something to me?”

“I don’t think Cordellia will need help,” Tanila replied. “But if you want to wait, I understand.”

Frowning, Batrire glanced at their ranger and then at the elixir in her hand, her head slowly bobbing.

“I… I’m going to go ahead and see what it does.”

With the utmost care, their healer undid the top, storing the glass stopper, dipped a finger into the gold liquid, and then touched it against her tongue. A gagging noise came as she spat.

“Ugg, that tastes… worse than that orange goo from a few tower floors back.”

Everyone grimaced, knowing full well how bad that had been.

“So, you going to drink it or you want me to give it a go?” Fowl asked, raising both eyebrows playfully.

“Oh go hump a troll! No, I’m not giving you this! It has to be something really good based on how it tastes. I just want to know why it has to taste so bad.”

They all chuckled as their healer took a few deep breaths, appearing to be psyching herself up for what would come next.

After the third one, she tilted her head back and downed the elixir, gulping down the entire thing in a single swallow.

Max moved, seeing their healer fall backward, her entire body stiff and rigid like a board.

“Batrire!” Fowl shouted.

Easily catching her, Max gently laid her on the tower floor, summoning a healing potion and preparing to pull the top off.

“Wait!” Tanila shouted. “Her hitpoints! They’re fine.”

Both men paused their actions, and Max saw that she was right.

“What in the gods is this stuff?” Fowl asked. “A crystal skill of legend, a… well, whatever Cordellia has, and now this?”

Batrire began to tremble and shake as if a seizure took over.

Heat began to radiate from around her and Max could feel the power exuding from her.

It pulsated repeatedly as she shook, and he had to hold out a hand, keeping his friend back.

“Wait…”

“But she’s–”

“Wait! Tanila is right,” Max said. “I can feel it and so can you.”

A dozen more pulses of energy came, and then the sound of a giant breath being taken came from Batrire as she began to breathe again.

“My love!”

Panting, their healer blinked, and Max sensed a change in her physical form. Her muscles expanded, and she started to grow taller.

A cry of pain came, and Fowl grabbed Batrire, pulling her close.

“What’s wrong?!”

“Max,” Tanila whispered. “You see it, don’t you?”

He nodded at her, watching as Batrire’s body changed. Gone was the softer shape of her easy life of healing. Now, it was a foot taller, almost as tall as him, and his sonar told him that her arms, legs, and torso were packed with dense muscle.

“Gods, I feel amazing,” Batrire said as she lifted a thicker hand and patted Fowl’s face.

The impact struck the dwarf harder than she expected, sending his head to the side and almost causing him to drop her.

“You hit me?! Why did you hit me?!”

She blinked, saw the red print forming on his cheek, and then glanced at her hand.

“I… I…”

“Check your stats, Batrire,” Max said. “I think you’ve grown a little bit.”

“Grown?” Fowl asked. “What do you–” He stopped talking, moving back as she sat up and frowned. “Are you taller?”

Their healer gasped and clenched her hand, hearing her knuckles pop and crack as she did. A smile began to form as she leaped to her feet, feeling both arms as she did.

“You’re almost as tall as them!” Fowl exclaimed. “You’re… taller than me!”

Laughing almost hysterically, Batrire grabbed him by the shoulder armor and lifted him, holding Fowl above her head and spinning him around as he had done to her just moments before.

“I promise you if you try to do that to me, I’m activating a skill,” Max whispered to Tanila, who laughed at his joke.

“Put me down, woman! Tell me what happened!”

Batrire relented, setting down their warrior, who took a step back. Both eyebrows became one as they furled together.

“The potion. It gave me 250 to my Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution!”

Max wasn’t the only one who appeared to choke at her words.

“250… to each stat?” Fowl asked. “You… you have three skills that are now tier one?”

“Five actually,” Batrire replied, puffing out her chest, grinning from ear to ear.

“Five… you have five…”

Their warrior started to laugh and then shook his head for a moment.

“Gods, that’s so sexy. I’m going to climb you like a–”

A cough from Tanila cut Fowl off, his cheeks turning red as their healer started to laugh.

“It would appear you’ll have to wait till later for that,” Batrire replied.

Max sighed, unsure if he was grossed out or ready for what would come next.

“Tanila. You’re up.”

Moving to the chest, their mage bit her lip, staring at the remaining two items.

“I wonder if it matters which one I pick. I mean, does it change on which one I win?”

“No one knows unless you’re holding back on the information,” Max replied.

She shook her head and then summoned a gold coin.

“I’ll let luck decide which one.”

She flipped the coin and let it fall against the stone and sand floor, the image of a tree showing for everyone to see.”

Without waiting, Tanila leaned over and touched one, and soon, a blood-red gem appeared in her hand. It looked like it swirled and moved with liquid.

Max watched as she studied it, holding it up and inspecting it from every side.

“What is it?” Fowl asked.

“I’m not sure, but I can’t get any information when I identify it. Worse, it says it’s bonded, so I can’t just hand it to someone else to try.”

Max perused his inventory and pulled out a dull orange gem.

“Want to see if this works?”

“Really? You think that would work on this?”

He shrugged.

“It’s the highest gem of unbinding I have. It’s the only one I have. You can’t find them anywhere else as no one seems to have the materials to make them now.”

“The real problem is you bought them all up and used them to unbind your stuff so you could give them away,” Fowl said. “Still… I think Tanila’s right. Would something of this power be able to be unbound?”

He held it out still, motioning once more with his hand.

“Try it if you want. It doesn’t matter if it fails. The last two have failed when I tried to unbind something.”

He watched her chew her lip and then shake her head.

“No, I’ll see what it does the hard way.”

Tanila took a deep breath and crushed it in her hand, gasping immediately.

Her hitpoints dipped slightly, and Batrire cast heal on her. The green glow that surrounded their mage was quickly replaced by a red strand of what appeared to be blood racing up her arm and toward her mouth.

It pushed past her clenched lips, disappearing inside, and Max saw her gold eyes turn red momentarily.

“Tanila!” Batrire exclaimed as she began to cast another heal.

“I’m… fine…” their mage replied. “I… the gem…”

Everyone waited for her to finish her answer as she turned her hand, pulling a sliver of glass that was stuck in her skin.

That gem… You can tell what I think it was.

Max knew the thought that Bob had, and felt his eyes widening.

“You unlocked a bloodline?”

She turned at him and nodded.

“I did… I’m at 25%.”

Links

//[2025-07-24 11:43]

[L1] https://www.royalroadcdn.com/public/covers-large/125599-cards-of-transcendence.jpg?time=1753042569

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/125599/cards-of-transcendence-a-deck-building-litrpg

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[F7]49/518(1) Chapter 518 - The Final Reward

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-24 16:00 [2025-07-24 11:41]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2462395/chapter-518-the-final-reward;
[F7]49/518(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-25 9:21],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-25 9:21],[Wayback_first2025-07-25 9:21],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-25 9:21],[this.word2025-07-25 9:27],[publish2025-07-24 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-24 16:00])Chapter 518 - The Final Reward - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 518 - The Final Reward

Max watched as his three friends stared at the pulsing yellow gem in his hand.

I am glad that this is bound. You need to use this. Every other time, you have given away the tower rewards. This one is different. You can feel it.

I can… but do we really need any more abilities or–

We do not know what it grants. You could be giving away something of enormous power. Think about what has been acquired so far. It would appear that those items were almost picked for each person here, and only Fowl acquired the one they were supposed to have received.

You should have gotten the blood gem, allowing you to be 100%. That potion and Cordellia’s gem should have been swapped if I guess right.

Which means this should have gone to Tanila.

And yet she acquired something she couldn’t trade or give away, just like you. Do not waste time trying to find out if you can unbind it. Take the power Max. For once in your life, consider how this can help your allies if you have it.

Frowning, Max sighed.

“You’re not seriously thinking what I think you’re thinking, are you?” Tanila asked.

“It depends on what you’re thinking, I’m thinking,” he replied with a grin.

She groaned before continuing. “What does Bob think?”

Max tapped his head and slowly closed his hand around the gem as he locked eyes with Tanila.

“I should crush it and see what was meant for you.”

“Meant for her? What do you mean by *meant for her* ?” Fowl asked.

“He thinks you were the only one who got the item meant for them. Cordellia and Batrire most likely got the other person's item. After I crush this, I’ll know for certain if he’s right.”

Their warrior scratched his beard and huffed.

“Then do it, dear,” Batrire said. “Your skill is right. Take this for yourself.”

Closing his eyes, Max squeezed and the gem shattered in his palm.

Warmth and power wanted to explode from his fist, yet Max couldn’t open his hand.

It fought and wormed its way through his fingers, covering his hand and racing toward his elbow.

Every inch felt like it was on fire, worse than any burn he had ever experienced, yet no damage was done.

Unlike the others, it only covered his right arm, the entire appendage radiating with magical energy that pulsed once and then vanished, absorbing through his skin.

[Wildfire - Epic Acquired]

[Wildfire - Epic - Magic is power, and there are few as strong as that which is wild and difficult to control. The caster can summon a single bolt of the spell once every twenty-four hours for half of their maximum mana pool. Damage scales off their base intelligence and the amount of mana spent. Wildfire is dangerous and, unlike many spells, can damage foes and friends alike. When unleashed, the caster will also suffer a portion of the damage.]

Yes! That is what we need!

Inside his chest and head was a sensation of Bob celebrating in a way he had only felt a few times.

What… this…

It is a power unlike any you have witnessed. As soon as you acquired it, a memory was triggered. Know this, Max, you must be careful when using

this spell. What it can do is devastating against some foes. Do not let your friends be close as it has a life of its own.

So a sentient spell?

No… a spell like… a black spell. It hungers for life and will consume anything that is nearby. You should be careful as well. There is no telling how much damage it may do to you.

“Max?”

Tanila’s voice made him blink and he smiled, seeing his friends watching and waiting.

“It’s a spell… Wildfire Magic.”

“Holy–” their mage started to say and stopped, words failing as her mouth moved. “Wild… wildfire magic? As in–”

“It’s an epic rank, and yes. Costs half my maximum mana pool, can only be used once a day, and injures anything near it. My enemy, you, even me.”

“What kind of crazy spell is that?” Fowl asked. “I mean, who would cast something like that?!”

“Any mage who could acquire it,” Tanila answered. “That… that was meant for me, wasn’t it?”

Max nodded.

“It would appear so. Still, I hope I’ll be able to do it justice like you would have. In the end–”

A cracking sound made him go silent as they all turned and focused on the point of the noise.

The purple crystal shell had a fissure starting to appear and more began to fracture, quickly spreading across the entire shell.

“I swear if she’s got wings and can fly, I’m going to spit,” Fowl muttered.

A high-pitched grunt came, and the face area shattered, falling to the ground.

“I… can… breathe!” Cordellia exclaimed, taking deep breaths. “I…”

She stopped talking, seeing them all looking at her. Then her eyes widened as she turned, more of the crystal shell falling to the ground.

“Uh… when did Batrire get so… tall?”

“Well, you’ve been in there a week,” Fowl said.

“A week?! I’ve been in–”

She stopped her shouting as their warrior began to laugh, and Max couldn’t help but chuckle, rolling his eyes at her.

“A few minutes at most. Need help getting free?”

Flexing and twisting again, the rest of the crystal cocoon ended up on the ground around her fee,t and their ranger shook her head.

“No, but all I can say is wow. This thing gave a nice… change.”

“Change?” Tanila asked.

“Yup! Look!”

Their ranger removed the covering on her arm, and each gasped at how her skin sparkled.

“What in the gods is that?” Batrire asked.

“Something happened to my body. I’ve got protection against weapons and spells as if I’m wearing plate armor.”

“Oh gods no!” Fowl cursed. “She’s not taking my job!”

Laughing, Cordellia shook her head. “Don’t worry, shorty, I don’t want that job.”

“The perfect item for a healer,” Tanila whispered. “Bob was right.”

“Sorry, what?” their ranger asked. “Bob was right about what?”

Max quickly explained what had happened, and the smile on Cordellia’s lips lessened slightly.

“What’s done is done. Don’t forget we all still have items waiting on us,” he said. “Everyone go at once?”

They all nodded and chuckles came as Fowl stepped onto his stool while Batrire grinned and kicked her stool away.

“I’m so climbing you tonight,” their warrior whispered.

“And there goes my stomach,” Cordellia groaned.

“Let’s just see what we got,” Tanila said as she reached in, everyone mimicking her immediately.

Max held the belt in his hands. The clear defensive item felt cool to his touch, and yet when he squeezed it, he knew it wasn’t going to break at all.

After having inspected their items, the others had already started to grunt and clear their throats.

[Inspect Belt]

*****

Crystal Belt of The Time Golem

+20% to Stats

+20% to Damage Mitigation.

Bonded

*****

Like the rest of his team, Max didn’t wait. He immediately stored it and had it appear around his waist.

The power that flowed through him felt amazing.

Although we did not get anything from the golem, we appear to have been rewarded well.

I’d still prefer to have a few skills or stats.

Yes, because what you just gained from that item isn’t important.

[Total Stat Check - Simple]

*****

STR – 6053

DEX – 5598

CON – 6238

INT – 4302

WIS – 4254

*****

He started to choke as he stared at the display before him.

“Oh gods, his must be broke,” Fowl muttered. “Do I even want to know?”

“It’s not that,” Max replied. “It’s… my total stats.”

“Please don’t tell me. All I need now is one more thing to point out how I’m the smallest one here.”

Chuckling, Max made a zipping of his lip motion.

“So what’s the plan?” Cordellia asked as she slowly touched the clear crystal earring she sported.

“I say we take our potions and the power crystals and check out the bazaar,” Tanila replied. “Then we can head back to town and wait for the cooldowns on our abilities. That will also give us more time to review everything we purchase thoroughly.”

“Always the smart one,” Batrire teased as she moved to her friend and squeezed her arm. “Even better though, is that we need to go shopping. I won’t have much to wear beyond my tower-climbing equipment.”

“Girls' shopping trip?!” Cordellia asked, eyes sparkling like her skin.

Fowl's face went blank as he stared at Max.

“Save me,” he whispered.

***

Max could see the concern on Tom’s and Everett’s faces as they stood in the room where they normally turned in items, gazing at all the random things they had acquired.

“This… is a bit disturbing,” their trainer muttered as he ran a finger along the blade of a sword that looked like someone had twisted it into a spring. “I’m just glad to know the tower isn’t giving stuff like this out as loot.”

Chuckling, Max shook his head and set down a cup that always filled up with soured milk whenever someone mooed like a cow.

“I wish I could tell you more, but thankfully, you both figured out on your own that we acquired these through different means. Somewhere in here is an item we need for the coming floor. It’s just a matter of figuring out what it is.”

“And all those other items you have on that other table, you don’t?” Tom asked.

“We don’t know,” Tanila replied. “As Max mentioned, we got all of those on the 80th floor. These over there we got on the 82nd.”

“You hear that, Everett? She says that like it's not a big deal. *The 82nd floor…* ”

Their Faction leader nodded, setting down a spoon and a 12-inch cube with six different colors scattered around it. Tiny grooves turned it into nine blocks on each side, and they could be moved to try to group them all together.

“It’s peculiar, that’s for sure,” he answered. “Still I’m glad to have figured out a little bit of how the tower changes. And to know the boss they faced wasn’t easy, even for them…” His silver eyes focused on Cordellia, who wrote down a few things in a journal. “Even more interesting is the difference between them. A sparkling elf and a dwarf who is six foot tall and could probably kick my arse now.”

“All while healing you,” Batrire said, smiling the entire time.

Everett chuckled and nodded. “Still, word is already spreading about how you all have changed. There will be many questions and I know you can’t answer most of them. My biggest concern is that you five remember there is life outside the tower. Don’t get caught up in the climb. In fact,” he paused, summoning a book and holding it out, “You might want to read this.”

Max leaned over the stone table, took the offered item, and opened it. His eyes widened as he quickly turned page after page.

“I forgot he can read like that,” Tom muttered.

“Perks of all those intelligence points,” Fowl said. “Still, it does make it nice when he’s wanting to learn a new baking recipe.”

Both men chuckled as Max ignored them, speed-reading the small book his leader had given him. In less than a minute he was done, frowning and offering the book back to Everett.

“You just found this?” he asked.

“It was a gift from a different faction. They gave it to me to thank you for all your party did to protect this town. While most don’t want ot give up crafting materials because of how hard it is to acquire them, they are willing to part with knowledge that is usually kept a secret, knowing it may help you all do the impossible.”

“Well, what’s it say?” Fowl asked. “Some of us can barely read if there aren’t pictures to go with the words.”

Max rolled his eyes at his friend before moving to where he could face everyone in his party.

“The story of a team that died because they tried to hurry through it as they neared the end. It said they met their demise on the 87th floor. I’ll spare the details, but it happened shortly after the Seth Pendal event. From what I can tell there was a golden age of adventurers who were carrying others past the 50th floor and up to the 59th.”

“So they didn’t have the bottleneck most face like right now in the thirties and forties?” Cordellia asked.

Max shook his head.

“No. There were three or four groups, based on what the book says, who were all above the 60th floor. They worked together to help each other, and when one of the groups reached the 80th floor, they changed. All the help and advice they had been given stopped as the party ignored advice, continually diving back into the tower as quickly as they could.”

“But we’re not like that,” their warrior said. “We’re…” he paused, seeing the pained expressions on Batrire’s and Cordellia’s faces. “What?”

“Honestly, I’m ready to go right now if I knew our cooldowns were gone,” their healer admitted. “I… I lied when you asked why I was so jumpy after we exited the tower. Truthfully… It’s like there's a hunger inside me for what else I might get. The sudden growth has… been overwhelming.”

“Literally,” Cordellia said. “But she’s right. Not only has my skin changed but I feel the same draw as well. The difference between us two and you three is that Max and Tanila have already overcome that thirst. You… well you know you’ll never be as strong as your wife.”

Fowl held up his middle finger at their ranger, frowning at her.

Max watched Everett as the older man slowly tapped his chin.

“What are you thinking?” he asked.

“I’m beginning to understand now why Dexic has been so… on edge since you took us into the tower,” Everett replied. “I’ve felt it as well but not like her. She sees the possibilities and can almost taste it. Right now, she’s working with a group, trying to prepare them and possibly join their party. It’s because she wants what you all have.”

“What’s that?” Fowl asked.

“Power.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]50/519(1) Chapter 519 - Leading is Hard

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-07-25 16:00

[2025-07-25 9:22]

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2465198/chapter-519-leading-is-hard;
[F7]50/519(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-07-28 10:50,=1 2025-07-27 19:54], [word.Waybak=1 2025-07-27 19:54],[Wayback_first2025-07-27 19:54], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-28 10:39],[this.word2025-07-28 10:52], [publish2025-07-25 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-25 16:00])Chapter 519 - Leading is Hard - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 519 - Leading is Hard

Max patted his sister’s knee and squeezed it.

“Welcome to the hardest part of being the warrior,” he said softly. “Loss is… hard.”

Stacy nodded, taking a deep breath and letting it out.

“It’s my fault. I pushed them too hard.”

“Do they blame you?”

She shook her head. “No. I mean, not to my face at least, but I can see it in their eyes. They hem and haw about whether we should go into a dungeon. They're scared, and I’m unsure if it's the fear of dying in the dungeon like Grella, our mage, or of me.”

“It’s not you,” Max replied. “But you’ve just experienced what will be one of the hardest challenges to overcome as an adventurer. True loss.”

Tanila didn’t say a word, just nodding as she held Callie in her arms, the child fast asleep.

“We’ve all been there. Fowl and I have spoken many times about the weight we feel rests upon our shoulders as the warriors. The truth is that every member feels it to a degree, even if it’s different. Your healer feels awful because they couldn’t heal Grella in time, prioritizing someone else. Your archer is most likely sick about being unable to do enough damage to prevent the spider that got your mage. And the off-tank is drowning his sorrows in another mug of ale because he couldn’t do the one thing he thinks he’s supposed to do.
“It’s not you. It’s the weight all of you feel. The hard part is that you must bring them together and move past this. You must talk it out, cry, remember Grella, and honor her. Trust me, it’s only going to get a lot worse.”

“But, what if I had drunk that potion you have for me?! I’d have been faster and–”

“No. Then you’d feel even worse for having stats twenty levels higher or more than everyone else in your party.”

“Just like her brother,” Tanila scoffed.

Squeezing Stacy’s knee again, Max smiled at her.

“If you need to cry, do it. Trust me, I’ve cried more tears than you can imagine. There is no weakness in admitting the pain of what you feel for the loss of someone you knew and care about.”

A few sniffles came from her and then the dam broke as she fell into his arms, sobbing as he held his sister tight.

He could see a few tears rolling down Tanila’s face as she mouthed *I’m sorry* at him.

Blinking, Max could feel tears in his eyes, knowing that this would not be the last time his sister cried like this.

***

“FINISH IT!” Max shouted, driving the wooden stake into the heart of the vampire rabbit he towered over on the ground.

A roar came from Fowl as their warrior thrust the one he held in his hand into the chest of the other vampire rabbit. Its red eyes faded and began to dim as its body dissolved.

Max felt the sensation of cold coursing through him and almost let out a moan of pleasure as the notifications scrolled by.

[100 Intelligence Consumed]

[75 Wisdom Consumed]

[Consume has Consumed 9 Skills]

[Skills do not Match Entity Type]

[Consume has Successfully Converted 1 Skill]

[Power Stored for Future Use]

[Would you like to learn [Blood Healing]?]

[Yes / No]

Gone was the moment of excitement, replaced with frustration as the tower hit him with more abilities and skills that seemed impossible to use or convert.

I know this is the 4th time I've said this, but you must be kidding me. Four bosses and only four skills... And the stats gains haven't been as impressive as I thought.

You're complaining about your Strength, Dexterity and Constitution being stuck at 1683. Do you remember when you only had four or five in each of them less than two years ago?

Okay... fine.... But the skills? Blood healing? Am I going to grow teeth and start to suck the blood of my enemies?

Most likely not. Again, I would say don't take it, but it's your call. The truth is it may come with a version of corruption like Death Magic. At this point, I doubt you'd give in to it, but you decide.

Sighing, Max selected no, causing Bob to absorb the skill.

[Power Stored for Future Use]

"That look on your face tells me it wasn't what you hoped," Fowl said as he moved to where Max was. "Still, that fight wasn't as bad as I feared, knowing we just defeated the 89th floor!"

Unable to help himself, he smiled and nodded.

"Yeah. Blood Healing was an option. I turned it down, though."

His friend frowned and nodded.

"Still, I can't complain about how amazing my skill is," Fowl exclaimed. "I'm telling you, I wanna go pick a fight with Dagon now and see if I can beat him alone."

Glancing down at the smoldering remains of the vampire he had slain, Max grinned.

"Well, it does triple all your stats for a minute, so I'm guessing you probably have him beat in that department. Then again, you still don't know the name of what his ability is, and trust me, it wasn't just stats that always killed us."

"It's the hammer, you idiots," Cordellia said as she drew near. "We've had this discussion twice already, and I'm telling you the hammer is what does all the damage."

“No,” Fowl shot back. “It’s not just the hammer. It’s everything Dagon has. His armor and weapon date back to the original dwarves if legend holds true. No one but the royal line knows the true power they possess.”

Their ranger groaned and shook her head. “I’m not going down that rabbit hole again.”

Max groaned as Cordellia started to chuckle.

“Gods, she’s as bad at jokes as you are,” Fowl muttered.

“Enough,” Batrire called out. “Look over there, you three.”

Max and the other two turned, seeing a portal that looked like silver metal, shimmering and reflecting like a mirror.

“Ugh… no chest and I’m guessing Chromie is behind that?” their warrior asked.

“You should call him by that name,” Cordellia said. “I’m interested to see if he knows how to make dwarf pancakes.”

Everyone but Fowl laughed as they moved toward the portal.

Waiting for Tanila, Max grabbed her hand as she got close and squeezed it.

“Less than three weeks to clear four bosses. Hard to believe,” he whispered. “Great thinking on hitting the bazaar each time we finish a boss and taking inventory of everything we purchased.”

“Bah, I feel bloated from all the crap we’re carrying. I mean, it was a great idea, not just because I came up with it, but still, we’ve managed to acquire a few good items, according to Alfreda. Even you looked excited at the ore you got from the last one.”

Max nodded and couldn’t help but smile, sensing that he was finally drawing closer to the last item or two he needed to craft the tooth Wekime had given him.

“I’m more interested in knowing what comes next. Five bosses, all hard but able to be defeated when one possesses the items. I won’t say it, but whatever comes next, I’m guessing it will be on a whole different level.”

She nodded and squeezed his hand tightly, her face tightening.

His sonar told him their child was kicking a lot more than usual and had grown, surprisingly faster than he or she had expected, considering the typical time an elf required to go full term.

“You okay?”

“Yes… This little one of ours is attempting to move around like you do. These last ten floors have made me wonder about what the gods told you. I just pray they are… normal.”

“Oh, I pray the same thing. Hopefully, they won’t look like me. That way, they’ll have some chance of being attractive.”

Tanila smiled, shaking her head as they arrived at the portal where the others were waiting.

“Warriors first!” she quipped.

Letting go of her hand, Max let out a playful groan and touched the shimmering mass of silver with his fingers, feeling it suck his entire being into it.

A scent of honey and lavender tickled his nose as his sonar detected nothing around him.

When his eyes worked a moment later, he saw they were in a large hall a quarter of a mile wide and almost a half mile long.

Near the opposite end was a table with five chairs on the closest side. On the other side sat Chromie in his gigantic chair.

“What smells so good?” Fowl asked. “My stomach just growled at me.”

“Food,” Cordellia said, and lots of it.

Max could barely make out the food shapes on the stone table, piles stacked up from one end to the next.

“I guess we’re having a party?” Batrire said. “The real question I have is what we’re celebrating.”

“Not dying,” their warrior replied. “Now then, if my nose is correct and always is, I believe I can smell ale.”

“That’s your breath,” Cordellia teased.

Blowing into his palm, Fowl nodded. “Guess it is.”

“Welcome!” Chromie’s voice boomed through the hall. “Please, come and join me. There is much to celebrate about and discuss.”

Everyone glanced at each other and then moved to where the chrome man sat.

As they drew close, a variety of pleasant scents reached their noses, and Max’s stomach growled. Even though he didn’t need to eat or drink more than once every two weeks, enjoying the taste of something good was still pleasurable.

“Please, take a seat and help yourselves. We must rejoice in you five having made it to the 90th floor of the tower!”

Chromie clapped his hands multiple times, and the sound of applause echoed throughout the room as if they were at the Colosseum.

Fowl didn’t wait any longer, covering the last few yards and grabbing a plate from the chair he had been heading towards. Food began to fill up the plate, some falling off the edges as he stacked a pile taller than his head.

“I assure you, there is plenty,” their host said. “Sit, please. The time has come for us to celebrate before the next phase begins.”

Max and the others quickly mirrored their warrior, picking up a plate and selecting a variety of meats, fruits, vegetables, breads, desserts, and other new foods.

Chromie snapped his fingers, and four cups, all filled with beverages, appeared before each of their chairs.

“I could get used to this!” Fowl exclaimed, wiping some foam from the ale tankard he had just drunk. “Look! It keeps refilling!”

“Please don’t get drunk!” Batrire protested. “The last thing I need is you making a fool of yourself, Fowl Hammerfall.”

“Bah!” was all he said before downing another full tankard. Their warrior set it down on the table again, laughing as it filled up again.

“This is amazing,” Cordellia said as she swallowed a piece of what appeared to be roasted meat. “I’m not a huge fan of meat–”

Fowl began to choke and their ranger growled at him from the opposite end of the table.

“Get your head out of the trash bin…”

Wiping off the liquid he had sprayed everywhere, their warrior just grinned.

Max sighed and motioned toward their host.

“Are you going to eat or…”

“I cannot help but make you all feel more relaxed by talking while you eat. Or, if you preferred, I could depart and return when it appears you are all done with this food.”

Max looked at the others digging in, and they all shrugged.

“We’re fine. Go ahead and say whatever it is you need to say.”

“Very well,” Chromie replied. “Let me begin.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]51/520(1) Chapter 520 - Conversations with Chromie

[F7]Next Chapter: yyyy-mm-dd-hh:mm [this.info_date]

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2467947/chapter-520-conversations-with-chromie;
[F7]51/520(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-07-28 10:50,=1 2025-07-27 19:54],
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[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-28 10:39],[this.word2025-07-28 11:19],
[publish2025-07-26 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-26 16:00])Chapter 520 - Conversations with Chromie - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 520 - Conversations with Chromie

“You five have reached the last stage of the tower. Know that so few reach this point and those that do, some stop right here, choosing not to go further.”

“Wait, tower climbers, stop? Even coming this far?”

Their host nodded his shiny head slowly at their healer.

“Yes. I will explain why in a moment, but know that with your accomplishment comes many rewards. All five of you have now reached the first tier in your stats. That milestone is not one most believe is possible, but the tower provides a chance for power beyond what any can truly comprehend.”

He snapped his fingers and an image of what Max recognized as their world appeared, floating above the table.

“Your world is one of so many that to give you a number might break some. There are countless creatures, insects, and other life forms that all try to grow stronger. Some are docile while others are bent upon destroying everything they set their eyes upon. Each world is created and set with a certain plan. Some stay within those lines and others evolve outside them.”

He snapped again and the world vanished, the images of Phaius, Ockrim, and Thuyja appearing now.

“Your gods came together to fashion this world and set rules in place, choosing the system that you live under. I am aware that you all have traveled to a different one and witnessed that they live within different boundaries. Soon, you all shall be faced with some decisions that will require you to choose if you stop the tower climb or continue.”

Chrome waved his hand and the images vanished.

“First, there are rewards to be earned. You shall receive something unique and tailored specifically to you. Know that power like this is only a small taste of what comes in the next realm.”

“Next realm?” Fowl asked. “What do you mean, next realm?”

Their host’s head turned to gaze at their warrior, his mirrored face reflecting the things around it.

“There are many realms of power and all I can say is that this world is one of the lowest forms. Keep your questions for later. More will be explained as I talk.”

Once more, Chromie snapped his fingers, and five different worlds appeared before them. Each of them looked different, some with more water, others with what appeared to be more forests or mountains.

“The true goal of any tower climber is to beat it. Doing so enables you to proceed to the next realm and become what many call a world champion. That title, which one of you currently owns even though you lost your world, provides you access to a new system. It is similar in many ways to how crafting works on your world. You will be allowed to design a new world that is your own and choose the system under which all life on your new home will operate under.

“It is from that place you will earn… currency. Similar to experience, it is how you will choose the course of your next path.”

“But can’t a world champion be defeated?” Cordellia asked.

“They can. There is too much to get into right now, but yes, world champions can challenge others. Defeating them adds the world to their domain and thus is leveling up like you call it. Again, I am not here to discuss everything yet as a time takes place when all this knowledge is given. For now, just know this is what awaits you.”

The planets vanished and Max felt his pupils dilate as Bob began to growl.

An image of a stone building that somehow felt familiar through their shared memories appeared above the table.

It was crafted from so many different materials and looked like a combination of different types of construction. Round shapes, square corners, diamonds, donuts, and more were combined, yet they didn’t look awful. Somehow, it all seemed to fit perfectly.

“This is the place you desire to reach. Here is the first step in being a true god.”

That is where the real power lies. We need to reach there.

What is it?

The home of those who control everything. Seeing it brings up a… rage… a desire to destroy and pillage. Whatever happened in my previous times, that is a place I know I loathe and yet desire.

Bob went silent, the sensation of one brooding flooding Max’s mind.

A snap came and the image was gone as quickly as it had appeared.

“Now, let me tell you what comes next before I offer you another alternative.”

Chromie stood, his immense size towering over them.

“Five floors are what you must face. These floors will be difficult because the creatures on them are the strongest we throw at you right now. If you manage to get past them, you will reach the 96th floor. There, we will meet again. Once more, you shall be granted a gift worthy of your achievement and I will give you one last reprieve before you ascend the final floors.

“This means I shall offer you a chance many have taken. That is how you all are here today.”

Max felt his eyebrows drawing closer and could sense his friends doing the same.

“If you choose not to continue the tower, there are gods who are willing to accept you right now as the starting being for their new worlds. You will become the king or queen of legends. The one who gave birth to the race you belong to right now.”

“Wait… you mean… the original dwarven king and queen were tower climbers who gave up?” Batrire asked, her jaw unable to close completely.

“Yes. Each of your races comes from a tower climber who reached that place long ago and chose not to risk death, instead becoming a legend and setting forth the direction of their race for the god they align with.”

“What… I mean… why?” Cordellia asked. “Why would one want to be… that?”

“Because often they have seen a friend or loved one die during their journey to reach this floor.”

Chromie’s last words seemed to come with a physical force as Max felt pressure pressing upon him from every direction.

“Death is the end. You will be no more. There is no rebirth for your kind. You simply cease to exist.”

“Wait… I thought our–”

“It is a lie, told to make you sleep at night and not cry when someone you love is gone forever,” their host said, cutting off their healer.

A pit grew in his stomach and pain blossomed in his chest as Max thought back to the funerals he had been to, the ones he had seen people only make it through because of what they believed came after.

“Some worlds provide that chance. Some gods choose to invest power in recycling souls. Your gods did not.”

A few grunts came, and Max wasn’t sure if he had done the same, feeling like someone had kicked him in the stomach. He turned to see Tanila with a few tears running down her cheeks.

“So… those worlds… if one becomes a queen there?” Cordellia asked. “What about those worlds? Do they return?”

“It would depend upon the god you strike a bargain with,” Chromie replied. “Now then. I have spoken all that I can and am allowed to for now. Will any of you choose that path? Rejecting the tower and departing for a new world?”

After he had spoken, the silence in the room felt almost deafening. Each person looked at the other, trying to guess what they might say.

“I will continue forward,” Tanila said.

“As will I,” Batrire declared.

“Guess that means I’m stuck as well,” Fowl joked. “Can’t let my wife go on without me.”

Max turned to look at Cordellia, who was frowning, her whole body tight.

“It’s your choice. No matter what you say, you get to choose,” he stated. “Just know we won’t fail. I already promised you I won’t let anything happen to you.”

“I… I know,” she replied. “It’s not that… It’s everything. All the lies and things we were told. The people I loved and thought I would see again. I’m angry… I’m pissed… I’m… ready to be different from the god I gave everything for. I’m going to keep climbing.”

Max smiled and nodded, turning to where their host still stood.

“I will continue to climb also.”

“Very well. Then we move to the next part.”

Chromie clapped his hands once, and the table with all their food and drinks vanished.

“Hey, my ale!” Fowl protested.

Their host snapped his fingers, and each of them had a small plain plain-looking metal chest appear at their feet.

“Inside is a reward crafted explicitly for you. The tower has decided what you need to continue this journey. You will be returned to your world after retrieving your items. When you are ready, the 91st floor will be available.”

As soon as he had finished speaking, Chromie vanished, leaving the five of them sitting in their stone chairs, looking upward.

Max shouldn’t have been surprised that as he sat there, about to ask Bob a question, Fowl bent over, grabbed the chest and opened it.

He reached into the small, one-foot-wide chest and began to pull out a shield that grew as it came out. Their warrior stood up, still lifting his hand, and eventually, the chest vanished as a thick silver metal shield as wide as him and to his shoulders was held in his hand.

“Uhhhhhhhhhhhhh…” Fowl stood there, words not working as he stammered.

“What is it?” Batrire asked.

“I… this…” He turned, showing the shield with two crossed hammers in the center of it. Lining the outer edges of the metal were dwarven runes. “It says it increases my damage reflection ability but gives 200 to Strength and Constitution.”

With those words spoken, everyone moved quickly to grab their chest, reaching in and pulling out the item explicitly designed for them.

Tanila stood there with a staff that radiated magical energy. It was completely clear, yet elven and dwarven runes glowed either blue, orange, or red.

Batrire's hands trembled as she held a robe that was made from a dark grey color. Golden runes glowed along the bottom of it.

"Holy mother of–"

A pair of forest green leather gloves covered their ranger's hands. She stood there, holding them close to her face, unable to stop touching them.

Max stood there, watching everyone else admire their equipment, wondering what could have caused them to act in such a way.

You need to see what yours is. I cannot fathom what it might be.

He stood there, staring down at the unimpressive metal chest, knowing there was something in there the tower had picked out just for him. Every item he had run through his mind and Max tried to consider what might be replaced.

Bending his knee, he lifted the lid, sticking his hand inside the swirling vortex.

His hand clamped onto something, and as Max began to pull it out, it stopped moving and something clamped onto his wrist.

Yanked down to the ground, his entire arm was pulled into the vortex, and Max braced himself against the floor with his other hand, unsure if he could be pulled inside.

"Max!"

The others came close, and Fowl reached out to grab him.

"Don't!" Max shouted, unsure what would happen if he did get pulled inside.

Something was holding his arm steady, not allowing him to pull free while the sensation of multiple fingers tried to undo the grip he had on whatever the object was. Two fingers were almost pulled from it, and it seemed he couldn't overcome the power of it.

Bob didn't wait, and Max went with it.

[Ultimate Form]

Every part of him grew, and his fingers wrapped around the object in the void, undoing whoever or whatever was trying to break his grip.

With a roar, Max thrust with his legs and yanked his arm back, breaking free from whatever had been holding onto him.

He leapt into the air, fingers wrapped around his prize, and almost needed Bob to use his wind magic to prevent him from smacking into the ceiling fifty yards above.

Landing on the floor, he huffed, turning to see his friends all staring at him in shock.

“What in the gods was that?!” Fowl exclaimed.

“I… I don’t know, Max replied. “It tried to take away what I've been given.”

“And what is it?” Cordellia asked.

Looking at the object in his hand, Max froze.

Now we know why someone or something tried to keep that from you.

Links

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[None]

[F7]52/520a(1) Chapter 520a - God Games

[F7]Next Chapter: yyyy-mm-dd-hh:mm [this.info_date]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2470374/chapter-520a-god-games;
[F7]52/520a(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-07-28 10:52,=1 2025-07-27 19:54],
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[publish2025-07-27 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-27 16:00])Chapter 520a - God Games - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 520a - God Games

“There are more here than I had expected,” Wekime said as he watched the line of gods moving toward the room with the watchers. “How long has it been since such a thing occurred?”

Hogroothu said nothing for a moment, his sight set upon the dozen gods still waiting to enter, each shrouded in a cloak that hid their presence.

“Ages… this one has stirred up the game in a way I hadn’t imagined possible in so long. We both know why it has happened. That fool of a youngling tried to kill him.”

The tiniest of grins made Wekime’s lips curl as he nodded.

“She will suffer much. I have heard reports that some of her worlds are already in ruins. Everyone knows that to appear weak is to invite others to challenge you and the punishment told to all has left no doubt about how weak she has become.

“Part of me wonders if she will still be around by the time they finish the tower.”

Purple swirling eyes brightened as the god of the void made a sound that Wekime knew was a laugh. “The irony of that would not be lost on all. Perhaps we shall see if others snuff her out or leave the pieces for him to get vengeance. Still, I am intrigued by how many have come, swinging the balance of rewards or limitations to that man and his group.”

Tapping a talon to his chin, Wekime considered some of the moves some had already made. He had sensed the presence of another one of the nine but did not know who it was. They had masked their identity with one of those cloaks and the power they knew how to use. Still, he knew it had to have been one of them that made the items on the 81st tower floor be hidden.

“This game gets better every moment. For so long, I have been bored. Tell me, Wekime, do you believe he is worth it?”

Nodding slowly, the god of dragons and one of the original nine didn’t hide his smile.

“This game has yet to truly begin. We are in the early stages of setting the board. Soon we shall play a game that may change everything.”

Once more, Hogroothu’s eyes brightened. “May we find amusement in the destruction of so many.”

Links

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[None]

[F7]53/521(1) Chapter 521 - The Fourth Piecet

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-28 16:00 [2025-07-28 10:54]
[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2472824/chapter-521-the-fourth-piece;
[F7]53/521(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-29 9:19],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-29 9:19],[Wayback_first2025-07-29 9:19],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-29 9:17],[this.word2025-07-29 9:25],[publish2025-07-28 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-28 16:00])Chapter 521 - The Fourth Piece - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 521 - The Fourth Piece

“Another artifact piece?” Fowl asked. “All you need is one more now!”

“One more?! He has three?!” Tanila exclaimed. “How… I mean… never mind, of course Max has three.”

Max couldn’t help but stare at the black piece in his hand. It vibrated, almost as if it sensed that he had three more stored in his dimensional space.

“It’s a shame you don’t have another,” their ranger continued. “Every elf knows the legends of what those could create.”

He felt Tanila reach out to him, touching his waist as his oversized body towered over everyone. “You going to tell them?”

“Tell us what?” Batrire asked.

“I… I got one from Phaius. This is my fourth one.”

No one spoke, but he could hear the gasps that their ranger and warrior made.

“I should have told you all but–”

The world began to shift and Max looked around, seeing the tower floor changing.

He quickly stored the piece, and two beats of his heart later, the team was outside the tower in the capital, standing on the platform.

“What in the gods?” Fowl muttered. “Did it just kick us out?”

“He told us it would,” Tanila replied. “I had expected a portal, though, not that.”

“What about–” their ranger started, stopping when the shouting of others came from around them.

“Who is that?!”

“Is that Max Hoste?! He’s huge!”

Guards and adventurers began to draw near, and Max sighed, realizing he was still in his Ultimate Form.

Bob's laughter almost made his head vibrate from how much his skill seemed to be enjoying this.

I told you that one day you wouldn’t be able to hide. Now your legend will grow, just as you have.

Deactivating the ability, he returned to his normal size, hearing the confusion and speculation of what ability he must possess.

“Touch me,” Max said. “I’d rather just get home quickly and figure out the next part versus having to wade through all of this.”

Fowl started to laugh, moving to where he was and grabbed his arm.

“Gods, we’re never going to be able to visit another tavern or ale house without hearing more songs about you.”

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Max stood there with his party, Everett and Tom having joined them in the private crafting room set aside for him.

Both men had been silent for almost a minute, staring at the three black blocks that were vibrating on the stone counter.

A low hum came from the fourth one in his hand, like a child crying out to its mother to be with her.

“You… you’re going to craft an artifact,” Tom said slowly. “A thing of legends. Right here, in our house. I…”

The man who had trained them, teaching them tricks and how to use their skills, started to tear up, his chest heaving from the air that seemed to struggle to enter his chest.

Without warning, he moved to where Max stood and knelt down before him, bending his head.

“Max Hoste. I promise you my undying commitment to you, your friends and your family. I am honored to know you and watch the gods above bless you.”

Shaking his head, Max stood there, confused as Tom stayed like that, glancing at the others who seemed to be as shocked as he was.

A few seconds passed, and Everett moved beside the Faction trainer and knelt, smiling as he looked up at him.

“Max Hoste… you have been a pain in my arse and a blessing at the same time. I too pledge myself to you as Tom has. Faction first, you second.”

He looked at Tanila, trying to find what to say when Fowl grunted.

“I won’t bend a knee, so don’t wait on me.”

Everyone in the room but Max chuckled and all he could do was sigh.

“Stand you two, please. I’m not worthy of this.”

“You are,” Everett replied, looking up at him, still kneeling. “You don’t realize it but Tom and I often joked about how you and your team would conquer the tower. Neither of us truly believed it until now. There is no doubt in our hearts or minds, proven by this action we do now, that you and your team will do something that hasn’t happened in thousands of years.

“You five will be heroes, legends, names spoken with pride and honor. Parents will name their children after you, and those young ones will try to live up to the name given them. Everything in our world will change because of what I now know for certain, you all shall accomplish.”

Tell them you are honored and accept their pledge. Both of them are old, and that position will probably cause them pain after a little while.

Laughing, Max stored the fourth artifact piece and stepped forward, putting his hands on both men's shoulders.

"Rise and thank you for this honor. As always, I will keep my promise to the Faction. May the Golden Axe continue to rise and be the greatest in all the land."

Sniffing, Tom wiped a few tears still present on his face and looked up, grinning from ear to ear.

"We are honored. Thank you."

As they stood, Max glanced at Tanila who was smiling, bobbing her head slightly.

"Now then, if you are done making me uncomfortable, I will see what happens when I put the four pieces together.

Both men quickly rose and moved to where they had been, eyes now locked upon the three blocks on the table.

Once more, he retrieved the fourth piece, feeling it pull toward the others.

Taking a deep breath, he set it down on the stone table.

All four began to vibrate, and a red glow began to radiate around the four of them.

Push them together. It is time.

But what will happen? Even Tanila didn't know.

You know this: I have no answer. None of my memories can recall anything specific beyond what needs to be done. For now, accept the destiny of what has been given to you, and let us see what the gods and the system give us.

Though they were harder than any other object he had touched, Max touched them so carefully, feeling the power against his skin, pushing them together.

A jolt of magic raced through both arms as the four merged, turning into a single block that started to change shape.

It lost its square form, turning into a sphere. A few seconds later, it became a black diamond as big as his head. Over and over, it pulsed, changing shape and form every few seconds until it became a black chest, darker than the night or the true absence of light.

A small line of crystal appeared where the lip of the lid would be and Max reached out, touching it with his thumb.

Pain came, and jerking his hand back slightly, he saw blood on the crystal edge, his thumb quickly healing.

His blood began to spread and grow, filling the band of crystal that ran around the chest. When it was all red, the chest pulsed, and the blood moved to the lid, turning into a set of runes and symbols that even his ability to know most languages couldn't understand.

All around Max, the sounds of his friends gasping and breathing heavily echoed in his sonar skill, but none of it could make him take his eyes off the chest. The runes flared with light, bright red, then turned dark like a blood ruby. A click came, and the lid opened on its own.

Inside was a pool of red that looked like blood, swirling like the vortex of dimensional space he knew well.

Every part of his being called out, and Max reached in, putting his hand inside.

Pain, light, and power infused every part of his body.

And the world shifted.

***

“You?! How?!”

A familiar voice rang out in his ears, and Max blinked, his sonar not working.

The shape of a lizard man he recognized stood before him, drenched in sweat, rolling off his scaled hide.

“Zisathass?”

Laughter came from the being that stared at him, eyes glowing red as he held a large hammer in his right hand.

“You remember my name. I am honored. Tell me… how is it you have come here?”

Glancing around, Max saw that he was in a small circular room. There was a forge, an anvil with runes he couldn’t read, and boxes stacked behind the lizard. A warm wind blew in from somewhere, and a red door was off to his left. Beyond that, the room was empty, made of purple stone like the dimensional storage space he had.

“I combined four artifact pieces. It made a box and brought me here.”

“I know that,” Zisathass replied, shaking his head. “I mean, how have you acquired them? Your kind rarely receives this kind of blessing or power. Yet twice now you enter my home. For you to do so…”

Max watched as the red eyes grew larger, eyelids pulling back and the lizard’s skin retracted from his jaw, showing teeth.

“You are the one! Ifrit! A world champion! That means…”

Zisathass started to pant, breathing heavily as he wiped the sweat off his chest and set the hammer down on the forge.

“I am honored to be in your presence. Forgive me for not behaving as I should have. You have collected the pieces, joined them together and I am the one who will help you craft a piece that shall be told across worlds. What is forged today will be a legend and grant you power like nothing you can imagine. But there is a cost. Are you willing to pay it?”

Max couldn’t help but frown.

“A cost? What kind of cost? Isn’t collecting the items needed to make an artifact hard enough?”

Laughter echoed around the room as Zisathass shook his head.

“It is and it isn’t. You and the few who reach this place like you are given the same offer. Some choose not to pay the price, taking instead an artifact that is powerful and rare. But the few willing pay the price, desiring something far greater, even if it costs them.”

“What is the price? What do I have to pay to gain something like that?”

Zisathass’s smile almost felt dirty, the red eyes shrinking as his eyelids drew together.

“I shall need three things. It must be all three or you will be unable to take this path. Many are willing to part with one or two. Most are not willing to part all three.”

Gods he rambles on.

Snorting, Max grinned, ignoring the look he received as the lizard cocked his head.

“Just tell me the price. I don’t need to hear anything else.”

Laughter came from Zisathass who nodded.

“Very well. The price is simple. I require that which you hold dear. A token of something so important that you know the loss of it will hurt. Try to give me something that isn’t valued will be known and we will be done.”

“Like an object I carry or own or what?” Max asked.

“That is for you to decide. You’ll know in your heart what is important.”

He nodded and started to think about everything he owned, trying to decide what could be so important to him that giving it up would hurt.

Glancing at the ring on his finger from Tanila, Max twisted it a few times, knowing it was important to him but that if he lost it, it wouldn’t be the end of the world.

The tooth in his storage came to mind, as he knew it had value. He could make a weapon from a different dragon tooth, but it wouldn’t carry the same power. So much of what he had done was based around trying to find out how to craft it.

Mentally Max checked off everything he possessed and stopped when he knew what it was.

Touching his neck, he felt the object that he and Tanila shared.

I believe you have found it.

Even though it’s not my strongest piece of equipment?

But it carried you through when we were on Igarra’s world. It is what connects you to her. We also know that if you give it up, she will lose hers and it will cause her pain.

His fingers ran along the Bonded Heart, which had long symbolized everything about his relationship with Tanila. They were one, bound in marriage and through this.

It pained him to will it to come off his neck. Even in storage it was a comfort. Yet Max knew that taking it off this time would mean it would be gone forever.

Closing his eyes, Max took a deep breath and willed it to his hand, holding it out to Zisathass.

“Take it.”

Smiling, the lizard reached out, tapping its talons against the necklace and wrapping its scaled fingers around it.

A bright light came, and Max's connection to it snapped. His whole body ached from the loss.

“Yes… This is dear to you. Very good. This price has been paid. Now then. You must pay the second price. You have given what is important. Now you must give what many will not. Tell me the part of your body you wish to sacrifice. I shall then collect it. You can offer as much as you desire. Just know the more you give, the stronger the artifact can be.”

Coughing, Max cleared his throat.

“I’m sorry, you want to cut off a part of me?”

“Or parts. You decide. For some, this costs little, for others it is a great cost. Some can regrow limbs in time. Others cannot. Just know that if you die from the loss, I am not obligated to heal you or return your body home. Instead, your corpse stays here for me to enjoy.”

Those red eyes seemed to glow, and Max almost felt creeped out.

“So I can heal after telling you what to take?”

“Yes.”

Laughing, Max couldn’t help but enjoy the sensation of Bob finding this moment humorous.

“I understand. If that is the case, then cut off my head and take everything from my neck down.”

Both red eyes grew wide, and Zisathass’s neck retracted as the lizard stepped back.

“You offer everything but your head?!”

“I do.”

“And if you die…”

“I understand,” Max replied. “Chop off my head, but leave it alone. The rest is yours.”

“Very well,” Zisathass said, his teeth showing as he smiled, his fork tongue running along his teeth. “Prepare yourself and tell me when you are ready.”

Max became naked, storing everything he owned in his necklace. The stats loss felt intense as he stood there, bare before this challenge, but knowing how it would go.

[Regeneration]

“Go ahead, I–”

His words never finished as pain came.

The world shifted as his head began to fall.

It stopped, and he sensed Bob using Wind Magic to keep it from bouncing on the stone floors.

Multiple times he had died and each moment had been a lesson in pain. Against Igarra, he had lost count. His skin and flesh had been melted, burnt off, corroded away, and yet this injury was the worst of all. Even getting cut in half couldn’t compare.

The spine began to form and grow downward.

Even amidst the pain, Max’s eyes worked, and he could see Zisathass watching him in awe, mouth open, as his body regrew.

“I… am impressed. My kind cannot survive an injury like that or heal so quickly. It appears that what I asked was not difficult at all for you.”

Max nodded slowly, his neck cracking as the last of his appendages grew back. Blood covered the ground where he stood, and glancing at his bare feet, he realized he was still naked, solving that problem with a single thought.

“So then, what is the third cost?”

Zisathass smiled and then began to laugh. This time, his whole body shoo,k and the scales of his chest expanded and shrank as he took another breath, breaking out in another round of laughter.

“You ask what the third cost is. Know that only one has ever paid this price. All consider the cost to be too great, and you will not be given back that which I have already taken.”

“I understand,” Max replied. “So tell me the cost.”

“You must give me all the experience and levels you possess. Returning to the beginning of your journey. Starting back at level one.”

Max couldn’t help it.

In all his life, he couldn’t recall a moment like this.

He had never laughed this hard.

Links

//[2025-07-29 9:25]

[None]

[F7]54/522(1) Chapter 522 - Take it All

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-29 16:00 [2025-07-29 9:17] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2475754/chapter-522-take-it-all;[F7]54/522(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-07-30 11:04],[word.Waybak=1 2025-07-30 11:04],[Wayback_first=1 2025-07-30 11:04],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-30 11:02],[this.word2025-07-30 11:09],[publish2025-07-29 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-29 16:00])Chapter 522 - Take it All - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 522 - Take it All

Zisathass stared at him.

“I said, take it.”

“I heard what you said,” the lizard replied, his voice gruff and harsher. “You do realize that when I take the experience and levels, you will also lose all the stats you have gained from them.”

Chuckling again, Max shrugged.

“So be it. I’m ready. Stop stalling and take it.”

Zisathass frowned, tapping a talon against his scaled chin.

“Are you certain? I think you do not understand how much this will impact you.”

He doesn’t want you to take the offer. Whatever happens, this must cost him a lot of power! He gains what he has from those who think they can give more but aren’t willing to endure the grind or loss of everything. Imagine returning home, weak as a babe, and people challenge you. Artifact or no, they would be easily conquered by enemies they had made in their rise to power. He, however, is bound to rules and must abide by them. This is why he is pushing you not to do it.

“Zisathass, take it unless you will break the rules and our agreement. I’m going to assume that the system would not like you breaking them, and you wouldn’t like the consequences.”

A snarl came from Zisathass, who leaned against the anvil, teeth barred.

“You do not realize what it will cost me to keep my part of the bargain!” Zisathass shouted.

“And yet I kept my part. Giving what was most dear to me, almost all of my body and now all my levels, experience, and stats gained from my levels. It is your turn to pay the price of our bargain.”

Growling, the lizard's hand snaked forward, grabbing Max’s wrist.

“I shall enjoy this!”

Black tendrils came from the scaled hand, rising up Max’s arm and wrapping around his throat.

Pinpricks inside his soul came, and Max felt the smallest amount of something being drained from him.

[937 Experience Collected]

[Error - No Levels to be Collected]

[Error - No Stats to be Collected]

Zisathass’s eyes blinked in two directions as lids that went sideways and up and down twitched.

“Impossible!”

Once again, his hand sent out black tendril,s and they repeated the process.

[Error - No Experience to be Collected]

[Error - No Levels to be Collected]

[Error - No Stats to be Collected]

“How?! How can you have nothing?!”

Max smiled, reaching over with his other hand and prying off Zisathass’s tightening grip.

“That’s not true. I had 937 experience, which you took. The truth is I’ve always been level 1.”

“Impossible! I can sense the power in you! You must be blocking me, thus breaking our deal!”

It was his turn to frown, and Max intentionally made his voice deeper.

“This might be your home and domain, but I have played by your rules and you have lost. The problem, Zisathass, is that you do not know who I am. You do not know what I possess. And if you do not keep your part of the bargain, I may see if the system will allow me to attack you and kill you. Because if I can, my skill, Consume, will take everything from you.”

Zisathass stumbled backward, crashing into some chests lining the wall and floor behind him.

Fear began to radiate from the lizard as he stared at it,

“You! A black skill holder?! Impossible! You are not–”
“Crazy? Bloodthirsty? No, but I am more than happy to let my skill have free control and do whatever it wishes to you if you do not keep the bargain we set and I kept. Now choose. No more stalling, no more games. Admit I have paid the three prices. Make the artifact you promised. If for a moment I feel you are cheating me or my skill says that you are, I promise you, it will consume you completely.”

The scaled neck puffed out, and then Zisathass slowly nodded.

“Very well. I acknowledge you have paid the price. I will craft what I have promised. Now tell me, what item would you desire?”

“Any piece of equipment? Like a ring or weapon or armor?”

Closing both eyes, Zisathass massaged his head.

“Yes. You choose. I can make anything you desire for yourself. Know that it is bound to you until death. If you die, then whoever kills you may take it for their own.”

What piece or slot?

A true artifact… such a decision is not one we can make without considering all the options but I sense what you are wondering. Ask him.

“I have a question. Can I offer an item to be used to make an item?”

Only the left eye of Zisathass opened, a glare of what Max assumed was content directed at him.

“You really think you could offer me anything better than what I have? Do you not realize the power of what I can create? How could you–”

Wekime’s tooth appeared in Max’s hand and the lizard’s mouth stopped moving.

Slowly, the lizard began to move forward, stopping at the anvil, both eyes now locked on the gift given so long ago.

“That… how…”

“None of that matters. It’s mine. Either I will one day craft something with it, or if the moment has come when it can find its true purpose, I am willing to work with you to craft an artifact from it.”

“Work with me?”

Max’s weapon appeared in his other hand, the standard spear he often kept it.

“I made this.”

Scaled lips moved in a funny way as the lizard blew a raspberry.

“The weapon has power. I can sense it, but–”

Zisathass stopped talking as it shifted shapes over and over instantly.

“I’m a legendary crafter. This is a named weapon. What I’m asking isn’t some silly request,” Max stated. “I’m offering a chance for you and me to work together to create what may be the greatest artifact you will ever construct. Perhaps your name will be known throughout the system because of it.”

“May I hold it?”

“Only if you promise not to keep it or use it for anything other than what I want.”

A chuckle came from Zisathass as he nodded.

“I will not steal it or use it for anything else. The power it has coming from it shouldn’t be possible. For a dragon tooth to be that strong… it would have had to have been given, as you could not have defeated it.”

Max watched as Zisathass studied the tooth from every angle, touching his mouth and licking it a few times. Each lick made the lizard shudder and moan.

“This… is from–”

“Do not say his name.”

Zisathass clamped his mouth closed so fast, Max was afraid he might cut off his tongue.

“I shall not. But a gift… from him…”

Immediately, Zisathass’s hand was extended.

“This is your custom. I promise to do whatever it takes to work with you and this tooth to create the greatest artifact I have ever made or will most likely make. This I swear on the system, or may it take away all I have and am.”

That sounds like a good promise.

For him that is probably an oath unlike any you will ever hear. To lose everything would be like a normal person reverting back to level one.

Grabbing the scaled hand, Max shook it and watched as Zisathass’s smile grew.

“Now then, let us see what you can do and I shall show you what I can create. Come, inspect the items in my chest and tell me what you desire to create. The time has come to make something gods shall fear!”

***

Sweat ran down his bare chest as Zisathass pounded the section of metal he held between tongs.

Over a week had passed in this place, yet Max didn’t care. Watching the lizard work was intoxicating.

Magic of a kind he couldn’t recognize exuded from the lizard's body. Zisathass had been surprised and excited to learn that Max could do something similar, merging the mana and magic from his world and elements when it was needed.

They were making more runes, crafted from a special metal that only a few supposedly could create, things that cost more than worlds, according to the maker of his artifact.

A few of the items he had collected had been laughed at, but the coin that Ockrim had given had already been melted down and turned into a rune.

“Now, pour the fire magic into it!”

Max did as he was told, watching Zisathass weave the thread of his magical energy, intertwining theirs as the metal was shaped and formed.

“Good! Good! Almost, keep it steady! See what I am doing. You could do this in time. Embue the metal first, then form the rune. Much easier this way.”

Zisathass laughed, excited at the opportunity to share and work together, teaching Max things he hadn’t even considered.

***

Breathing was difficult, the vast pool of his mana almost dry as Max gave everything he had been instructed to give.

On the other side of the crystal table Zisathass had summoned, the lizard looked ready to pass out.

“Almost… just a little more… one last thing.”

Max nodded as he felt the pain of running out of mana draw near.

You can push through. We are almost there. This… this is a weapon that even Wekime might fear.

Nodding to no one but Bob, he watched as Zisathass put the last rune into place. The tooth was almost hungry or thirsty. Gladly absorbing every bit of power he offered. Now it was just as happy to take the runes and the magic they possessed. Each one had been absorbed, sinking into the pearly white weapon, something far beyond what Max had ever imagined.

A small hammer tapping the rune into place was like thunder. Every tap felt like a storm was contained in this tiny room, power reverberating through their very being.

“One more, you do it!”

Blinking, Max saw Zisathass holding the hammer out.

“What?”

“Hurry… I cannot… hold on much longer.”

Max took the hammer and saw the spot where a single talon tapped.

“Here… now.”

The strike didn’t have to be hard. It just needed to happen.

Like a lover gently brushing the cheek of the one sleeping next to them, the weird stone hammer tapped the last metal rune and a shockwave of power blew his hand back.

[Crafting Complete]

[Artifact Crafted]

[Error - Entity does not possess skill for Crafting Artifacts]

[Presence Detected]

[Zisathass - Entity possesses Artifact Crafting Skill]

[Determining Power]

[…]

[…]

Max waited, still panting, eyes locked upon the display before him.

[Power infused from Zisathass Calculated]

[Power infused from Max Hoste Calculated]

[Artifact Power Level Determined]

[Error - Power Exceeds Approved Limits]

[System Request In Process]

“What… what is that?” Max asked.

“I’m not sure,” Zisathass replied. “I never made anything that–”

[System Approval Granted]

[New Tier Created]

[Error - Power Level Deemed to Great for User]

[Setting Limits]

[System Override]

[Unlocking System Created]

[Tiers of Power Created]

[New Artifact Tier Adjusted]

[Artifact Level Finalized]

[Congratulations - Artifact Created Starts at Paragon Tier - Potential Evolutions - 3]

[System Detection - Hidden]

Zisathass began to speak in a language that Max understood and immediately knew the lizard was cursing.

“Is that good?” Max asked as he stared at the weapon on the table.

“Good? GOOD?! Gods will kill for this! If they ever learn of the power it possesses. What this can do… what this can become… I’m surprised they allowed it even to be made.”

“Who allowed it to be made? The system?”

“The archons, they are–” Zisathass choked, unable to speak for a moment, gasping for air. “You’re not aware of… I cannot speak anymore. The system will not allow me.”

“Still, why would they allow it? What purpose does that serve?”

Zisathass slowly shook his head.

“I cannot answer. Rules. Rules bind us all. But for this to be allowed… someone may have bent a rule.”

Max reached out, putting his hand on the shaft of the weapon he had just helped create.

“So… ready to find out its stats?” Zisathass asked.

Laughing, Max nodded.

Links

//[2025-07-30 11:09]

[None]

[F7]55/523(1) Chapter 523 - An Artifact Is Born

[F7] Next Chapter: 2025-07-30 16:00 [2025-07-30 11:42]

[F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2478532/chapter-523-an-artifact-is-born;
[F7]55/523(1[this.Waybak=1.1 2025-07-30 16:03],[word.Waybak=1.1 2025-07-30

16:03],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-07-30 16:03],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-07-31 11:11],[this.word2025-07-31 11:23],[publish2025-07-30 16:00], [this.Last_edit2025-07-30 16:00])Chapter 523 - An Artifact Is Born - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road

Chapter 523 - An Artifact Is Born

Max lifted the spear off the table.

Power exploded within his body as he held it.

It was as tall as him, carved entirely from the tooth of Wekime. Bands of metal were inlaid along the shaft every few inches. Each one had been absorbed, now slightly visible but unable to be felt. Runes glowed slightly, but most were inactive, requiring him to channel a slight trickle of mana according to what Zisathass had told him earlier.

He smiled. The smallest trickle of mana now infused the weapon, and it transformed into a sword. With a single thought, it became a hammer and then an axe.

“That is an ingenious trick,” the lizard said. “Smart to do when you can use all weapons.”

Nodding, Max smiled and took a deep breath.

“Let’s see what you made.”

[Inspect Weapon]

*****

Artifact One of the Nine - Wekime - God of Power

Current Rank - Paragon - Tier 0/3 Unlocked

+ 100% to all Stats

+ 100% to Mana Regeneration

+ 100% Damage to gods

Shapeshifter - Able to become any melee weapon within ½ or 2x current mass.

Bound - Transfer ownership to the killer of the current owner.

Recall - Able to throw and recall the weapon.

Hidden - The System does not detect or reveal the weapon to anyone in the system.

*****

Max’s hand trembled even though he felt stronger than ever in his life.

As he detailed the information to Zisathass, the lizard said nothing, just clicking his tongue repeatedly.

We are fortunate that the system has hidden this. If word got out that you possessed such a thing, we would face an unending amount of attempts on our life.

Which begs the question, why? Why allow this? Why give us this?

Someone is playing a game. We are a pawn in it, but soon, we shall be more than that. For now, you must agree not to tell anyone, not even Tanila, the stats. You would not want to put any of them at risk by simply knowing.

“You do not understand what that is, do you?”

Max blinked and saw Zisathass leaning against the crystal table, still sweating, tapping his talons against it.

“What do you mean?”

“That is a god killer. You will learn later how that game works, but know that I need you to go.”

“I’m sorry you’re kicking me out, " Max said, confused by the sudden change in the lizard's demeanor.

“Yes. I need you to go. Others are begging for me and what I do across the system. We have been here far longer than any other time. Fear not, no time has passed in your world, but it has cost me incredible power to make that weapon. Whatever you do, be careful and remember me.”

“Remember you?”

Zisathass laughed and snapped his finger, causing the red door to open.

“Yes. One day you will understand. Just remember me. I shall wait for that day.”

Before he could speak, another snap came and he was wrenched to the side, tossed into the open doorway and then in a swirling darkness.

“Touch it already,” Fowl said. “Wait… where did it go?”

His sonar roared to life, and Max knew he was back in the crafting room with his friends.

A cry of pain came from Tanila and Max turned, seeing her grab her throat.

Pieces of her necklace fell into her hand, the heart broken in two.

“What… what happened!?” she exclaimed. “Why did this break?”

“I had to pay a price to craft the artifact. That which I treasured the most,” Max replied.

“Wait? You already crafted it? How? Where?”

Fowl’s outburst of questions made him raise his hand and Max realized that his weapon wasn’t in it.

“What in the…” He stopped himself, sensing it in his storage. It felt different, yet the same. “I… I touched the box and it took me somewhere. There I was given this.”

When Max summoned the weapon as a spear, it looked less vibrant. The same spear was there, but now only the tip kept its white bone appearance. The shaft looked to be made of black metal now, and there were no runes present at all.

“That looks… uh… unimpressive,” Fowl stated. “What’s so special about it?”

“He’s right,” Tanila said, her eyebrows narrowed. “I don’t detect much magical power coming from it.”

“The blade at the top. It’s from the tooth.”

“Holy elf tits,” Batrire cursed. “ *The tooth?* ”

Max nodded and smiled.

“So… you going to tell us its stats?” Cordellia asked.

Shaking his head, Max sighed.

“No. I can’t. Rules and all. Stupid system. Just know, it's nice.”

“Broken, most likely since you have it,” Fowl muttered. “Still, I’m glad you finally got to use that tooth. Now I can’t wait to see it in action.”

Everett cleared his throat and tapped the stone table.

“So, will you announce you just did the impossible?”

“No. I don’t want anyone to know and I would prefer not to have that extra attention. Ultimately, it would only put the Faction and everyone else here at risk.”

“It was a good decision,” the older man replied. Still, congratulations. Part of me wants to throw you a party. The other part wants to cry out to Phaius; it's unfair.”

Tom laughed and slapped his friend on the back.

“We learned that long ago, when it comes to Max, nothing is fair.”

***

“So you really aren’t going to tell me?” Tanila asked.

Barely touching her cheek, Max shook his head.

“I can’t. Trust me, if I could, I would but you would understand if you knew. Everything I do is to protect you and our child.”

She sighed and rubbed her belly.

“I trust you on that. You do appear to be excited about it. Your dwarven brother is green with envy.”

“I’m not sure why, but he’s got some really good gear on the last few floors.”

“You know he looks up to you and not just because you’re taller,” she joked. “He’s always been in awe of how you handle everything and a little jealous of your growth. His commitment was shown through the brother ceremony. Give him some time. He’ll get through everything.”

“And what about Cordellia? She seems to be doing better. You two have been spending a lot more time together.”

“Part of that is the blood bond. With my father gone, it’s a natural thing. Since I don’t hide my hair or eyes anymore, no one in our party and even at the Faction really comments, but the random elves we encounter all unconsciously move toward me.”

“What can I do to help her?”

Cocking her eyebrow, Tanila glared at him.

“Not thinking about finding a skinnier elven woman, are you?”

Groaning, Max winked and kissed her, putting his hand on hers.

“No. I’ve never been that guy who wants a bunch of women to take care of. One’s hard enough.”

Grunting, she poked him and shrugged.

“Ask her yourself. She feels like a third wheel. That’s why she stopped knocking on the door. She complained that someone was snoring when we all slept together.”

“See, when you say it, that sounds bad, but if I say that, I get in trouble.”

Tanila poked his chest again.

“Because you and Fowl have dirty minds.”

***

“So this is what you like to do?” Max asked. “Why didn’t you tell us?”

“Because it’s not easy to talk about what I went through. I found out that others have endured pain similar to mine. That’s why I come here.”

Max nodded, trying to ignore the stares of every woman, man, and child on the property Cordellia had taken him to.

There were various houses, many of which were being repaired and upgraded. Their ranger recently gave them some gold, which he discovered was needed to start all the repairs.

Different groups were outside, some working on crafting, others reading or meditating. A few were off doing drills.

Yet Max could see the pain behind the eyes of many he encountered.

Each of these people has been abused in some way. Where was all this? How come I never saw it?

People do not go looking for these. You saw it with your sister and family when you returned home. I have access to memories of when you were younger. You saw them. There was a boy you gave food to one time.

As Bob spoke, a memory was pulled from his mind, and the moment played out before him. He had just finished baking, practicing his skill, and coming home with a basket full of muffins. For whatever reason, he had gone home a different way and through a part of town he had avoided. The homes weren't as nice, and the road wasn't as well-kept.

There was a kid who looked about nine in an alley, wearing dirty, ratty clothes and digging in a barrel.

His eyes had locked upon each other, and he felt the pain somehow.

Without thinking, he had simply reached in, pulled out a muffin, and offered it.

The boy didn't wait a second, scurrying over and plucking the warm treat from his hand.

In seconds it was gone and those big blue eyes looked up at him longingly.

Max hadn't given it a second thought, holding out the basket.

"Take them. There's eleven more."

Tears appeared, creating clean streaks on his dirty face, as the boy came forward and hugged him.

He hadn't squeezed back, unable to react.

Then he patted the dirty blond hair.

"Thank you," the boy replied as he snatched the basket and looked around the street. Without another glance, the child was off, weaving through the alley he had come from.

That moment is one of the many that forged the man you are.

"It makes me cry, too," Cordellia said.

Max blinked and touched his cheeks, surprised at how wet they were.

Turning, he grabbed her shoulder and pulled her into a hug.

"You're an amazing woman and I'm thankful every day that you're part of our family," Max whispered. "Never stop being you."

Her rigid form turned soft in his arms, and she hugged him back, sobs starting to come as he held her.

Neither cared as they both cried.

Only Max knew that no one seemed to think it was strange, not looking in their direction. Seeing two people crying as they hugged was apparently normal in this place.

***

“We are honored by your kindness. Thank you again.”

Max nodded and bowed slightly as the headmistress of the home for all these people gazed at the ring he had given her.

“Inside is one thousand gold. Do what you do best.”

Her hands trembled, and the ring fell to the dirt.

Cordellia bent down and picked it up, brushed off the silver storage ring and held it out.

“It’s ok Mrs. Britton. Max is just that kind of guy. He’s one of the few who helped me with what I endured.”

“But… It’s a thousand gold!” she whispered. “A thousand!”

Nodding, Max pointed at a few of the houses.

“There are still more that need repair and you can use that to get some real help. I will speak with my Faction leader and see if he can’t get some of the craftsmen and women from our home to come and do some work as well. We can get this place spruced up.”

“But why? I mean… I understand why Cordellia gives back… but… only those who truly know pain usually help us.”

Max took a deep breath and let it out slowly.

“People think the songs and stories they hear about me are the real me. They’re not,” he replied. “All the songs are about one or two things I’ve done. No one talks about the pain or loss. Like you and everyone else here, I’ve had moments where I thought all was lost and alone. It was through people, random people who were kind and helpful, that I made it through. Ask Cordellia, she’ll tell you. I’m no different than anyone else.”

Their ranger snorted and rolled her eyes, giving him a poke to the side.

“Yeah… the guy who defeated the elven king is like us.”

Both women laughed and Max groaned.

“He’s right, though,” Cordellia said. “He knows hur,t and he’s made it through. In all my life, I’ve never met a man like Max. His wife is lucky because I’m pretty sure they broke the baking mold when they made him.”

“Well then, thank you,” Mrs. Britton said. “I… we are all grateful for your support and example.”

***

Max smiled as Cordellia chewed on the kabob they had picked up on their walk back through the street.

“What’s got you in such a good mood?” she asked.

“Oh, for a moment, I realized you like me. If only Fowl were around. I could have made a few gold.”

She grunted and pointed her half-eaten stick of meat at him.

“Keep it up, and I’ll lie about everything that happened today. Then no one will know about how the great Max Hoste helps those in need.”

“Please lie for me. I can’t stand any more songs about me.”

Cordellia laughed and shook her head.

“We both know that’s not true.

Links

//[2025-07-31 11:23]

[None]

[F8]56/524(2) Chapter 524 - A Message Delivered

[F8]2) https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2481129/chapter-524-a-message-delivered; [F8]56/524(2[this.Waybak],[word.Waybak],[Wayback_first],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:54],[this.word2025-08-06 9:18],[publish2025-07-31 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-31 16:00])Chapter 524 - A Message Delivered - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 524 - A Message Delivered

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Laughter echoed in his head.

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The silver dragon he was sitting on began to thrum, both wings outstretched, gliding through the sky.

I come to enjoy your skill more every day.

Max groaned as the two of them picked at him. He had been busy since helping the group Cordellia had found. Orders had to be given that no one else could be of assistance, as every noble in the city started trying to give aid once word got out that he had taken the group under their wing.

People will always try to gain your favor. Fowl was right. You could start relieving yourself into a cup off the porch of a tavern, and everyone would race there to do what you did. The number of bald men and women in your city is alarming.

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Grunting, Max looked up into the night sky. The moon illuminated the clouds below, turning the image below into a glowing sea.

We are going to give Sylvandra a chance to rule. Tanila believes she can be reigned in, and fear will do wonders.

And if she resists and is foolish enough to defy you?

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Eventually, you must rest. I know you don't require sleep, but you never stop unless you are with your family or friends. Every other hour is spent preparing for your departure. Tomorrow you plan on going into the tower and attempting the first boss.

Remember, there is more to life than just the tower.

Scratching the scale on Rakonath's neck, Max knew his dragon was right. Everyone who knew him said the same thing.

I'll try. For now, let us talk about other things and enjoy the trip to Mylho Alora. And don't forget, I'm choosing to fly with you rather than just teleport myself there.

Perhaps I should bow my neck and thank the great Max Hoste for his kindness.

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The guard was trembling, and a scent of having wet himself arose.

“I’m not going to kill you. Go and ensure she is on her way.”

In a single movement, the elf was up and racing toward the hallway, running like his life depended on it.

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Her face bore no expression, as if his summoning of her was no different than walking to the bathroom, yet the moment she got into range of his sonar, Max could sense her pulse racing.

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In the light of the rising morning sun, her golden hair and eyes seemed dim, unable to compete with the sun.

“I doubt that but still, I’m here to give instructions and not haggle. There will be no debate. Do what I say or die.”

She opened her mouth and Max raised his hand.

“Think carefully before you speak, Sylvandra. I bear no more ill will and you should thank your daughter that she believes for now it is best if you reign. I tire of the endless lives I must take. But do not believe for a moment I won’t snap your neck without hesitation if you disobey me.”

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“Good. Now listen and know I won’t repeat myself. You will learn to live differently from your husband did. Stamp out those who call themselves zealots. Either make them understand that path will lead to the eradication of most of your kind, or take

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Links

//[2025-08-06 9:18]

[None]

[F7]56/524(1) Chapter 524 - A Message Delivered

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-07-31 16:00 [2025-07-31 11:19] [F7]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-starts-67/chapter/2481129/chapter-524-a-message-delivered**;[F7]56/524(1[this.Waybak],[word.Waybak],[Wayback_first],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-01 10:21],[this.word2025-08-01 10:29],[publish2025-07-31 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-07-31 16:00])Chapter 524 - A Message Delivered - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 Starts 6/7 | Royal Road**

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Links

//[2025-08-01 10:29]

[None]

[F7],[F8]57/525(1) Chapter 525 - It's Big

[F7]Next Chapter: 2025-08-01 16:00 [2025-08-01 10:40]
[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2483863/chapter-525-its-big;
[F8]57/525(1[this.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-06 10:01,=1.1del 2025-08-04 11:53], [word.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:01],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-08-04 11:53], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 9:59], [publish2025-08-01 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-08-01 16:00])Chapter 525 - It's Big - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 525 - It's Big

"It's pretty big," Fowl said, his voice not hiding his shock.

"It's not that big," Max replied.

"Bah, don't lie. It's the biggest one I've ever seen or imagined!"

Groans came from the three women behind them, and both men glanced back, shaking their heads at them.

"Really? We're talking about that boss."

"Suuuuure," Cordellia replied. "You expect us to believe that?"

"Trust me."

Batrire shook her head at Fowl. “You both done having fun? We need to figure out how we’re going to do this. We’ve only got about three minutes left.”

Max nodded, the timer floating near them counting down. It had already taken off less than two minutes since he arrived first.

Before them was a massive open area, easily a few miles from what Cordellia had said in every direction. Stone walls went upward, and he couldn’t see the end of them, not knowing if the sky above could be reached or if there was a barrier somewhere to stop him.

On a grassy field was the largest dragon he had seen besides Wekime. Its green scales shimmered in the light of the day and its black eyes stared at them.

“I mean, I could try to talk to it. The problem is I don’t know if we can pass this floor without killing it. Chromie had said all we needed to do was get past them.”

“Do you think it would be that easy?” Fowl asked. “Why would the tower give us a dragon when you seem to get along with most of them?”

“I don’t get along with most of them. I’ve killed three, two of which were not fans of me at all,” Max replied. “Still, I want to know why this is our first boss. I can see how it would be a tough battle for any group.”

“Especially considering there aren’t any natural defenses that we can find. Just pure open space and nowhere to hide,” Tanila said. “It’s basically a dragon's killing field.”

“I say we let Max talk with it,” Cordellia said. In the worst-case scenario, it attacks, and he gets hit first.”

“What she said,” Fowl said.

Sighing, Max shrugged and summoned both weapons, feeling power surge through him.

[Total Stat Check - Simple]

*****

STR - 8743

DEX - 8668

CON - 8743

INT - 6731

WIS - 6669

*****

Every time I look at those numbers, I’m interested to know what a difference it will make when fighting something like that.

Then don’t talk, just attack.

I’m not sure Wekime would appreciate that.

He would most likely not. Still, I am just as anxious as you to see how much damage you can do. But play the game. Let it decide if it will be the test subject.

“Alright, let’s get ready. After Batrire buffs us, I’ll go.”

“Want the special buff?” their healer asked.

“No. Save it. I doubt we’ll need it for this one.”

“Wait, why do you say that?” Fowl asked. “Do you expect it not to attack?”

Max grinned and shook his head.

“No. It’s because I’m ready to test my new toy out.”

***

“Stop human! Do not come closer.”

Max did as the green dragon asked, looking up at the huge beast, knowing it was probably a fourth bigger than the gold dragon he had slain for Aerthen.

“I bear the mark of your Father. Tell me, dragon, what is your name?”

He smiled as the beast’s head rose, and it cocked its immense head a little.

“You speak our tongue? Not only do you bear the mark but I also sense something else within you. A kindred… soul. Tell me, how, why do I sense this?”

“Names first. I am Max Hoste, and you are?”

The green dragon huffed, shifting its wings as it stared at him momentarily.

“My name… There is power in one's name, yet you freely give yours. Either you are foolish or what I sense is worthy of me giving it. Tell me, why should I not simply attack? You would be another to die by my claws.”

Max shook his head and began to laugh.

A loud growl came, and he could sense a change in the air.

“I have killed three dragons, all smaller than you, yet one was only slightly smaller. All of them thought they were stronger and each of them now is a material I give to those who are my friends or allies, filling vaults with scales, teeth, and bones that will take ages to craft.

“Two dragons I call friend, a third… I believe I could have had there been no way to go on without killing him. One of those dragons… is my dragon. Bound to me.”

The swelling growing in the green dragon’s chest stopped, and those black eyes narrowed, its head slowly coming toward him.

“You… I know not your name, but I have seen you in my dreams. Not as you look, but different.”

“It is how your father communicates with you,” Max replied. “Trust me when I say I can go either way. Tell me your name, show me another way for my friends and me to pass this tower floor, or know that I will not hold back. I will send another one of his children to him if I must.”

“Bekat. That is my name.”

“Bekat?”

“Are you mocking me, *Max?* ”

“No, just ensuring I said it right,” he replied. “Now tell me, is there a way for us to move on from here without slaying you?”

The green dragon snorted, a tiny wisp of green smoke escaping its nostrils.

“You speak as if I will stand here and let you simply cut my heart out. I am not like the other dragons you have faced.”

“And I am like nothing you have ever encountered,” Max said. “I will take from you your core, preventing you from healing, and then I will take your heart.”

I’m beginning to think you should just attack him. This is boring me to death.

Bekat shifted his position, letting out a roar as it did.

“You can not speak to me like I am nothing! I shall–”

Max stopped listening, knowing he would either piss off the dragon with his last statement or cause it to back down. Once it roared, he knew there was no going back.

It has been a while since I have been this excited!

[Ultimate Form]

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

[Haste]

Max’s movement was so fast that it almost made the first attack he made not hit where he wanted. Bob helped get him under control, adjusting the path with Wind Magic as he shot toward the dragon’s stomach.

Both weapons became curved swords, and the swing of his newest weapon cut through those scales with ease. They parted as the second and third slashes created an opening into the dragon's skin.

Bob reset his cooldowns repeatedly, allowing Max to hack and slash his way through Bekat as the dragon began to move.

Stone, air, and ice walls grew inside the dragon's body, keeping flesh from squishing him. His skill sent out waves of fire, bolts of lightning, and wind blades that went off in other directions.

Max knew the dragon was trying to expel him somehow, its body most likely airborne as the world seemed to want to pull him backward, yet Bob kept his position secure with his magic.

It grew hotter as he cleaved his way through the dragon. Things changed when an attack hit a thinner part, sending gas rushing at him, along with liquid that smelled like death.

[Personal Barrier]

[Poison Resisted]

Another roar came, muffled to almost nothing, yet Max could feel the vibrations through the beast, knowing he was where he wanted to be.

Power was nearby, and a slight glimpse of light was visible amidst the darkness of Bekat's body.

You need to thank Aerthen for telling you dragon anatomy so well.

Later, focus!

Bob's laughter and enjoyment of this moment flooded his senses as he pushed past the liquid pouring into the tunnel he had carved out. Turning both weapons into spears, Max flew forward, able to see that he had indeed reached the belly of the dragon.

Inside, it was a core much larger than he had expected.

Bob sent out walls and tried to stop the stomach that began closing in on itself, gas coming up from below and filling the space.

[Poison Resisted]

I'll bet this dragon is rethinking his original plan.

Grunting, Max raced to the core and put both hands on it, trying to store it.

Tendrils of magic resisted his attempts, the power flow keeping the core attached to the stomach lining.

I guess we'll have to cut this out after all.

Bob released chaos in every direction, sending out spells that tore through the dragon’s stomach, yet no matter how much they cut, the stomach would shift, putting the core against another patch, and healing the injuries they caused before Max could break it free.

I guess you finally get to try out that new spell.

Holding out his left hand, Max pointed his spear forward and started channeling.

[Wildfire]

His arm glowed like the sun, and the very flesh of it melted away.

Regeneration was dealing with the damage the stomach acid had caused, but this time it didn’t do anything as everything except his bones was devoured from his shoulder down.

It ached and burned as the spell grew and then raced forward, striking the walls of Bekat’s stomach.

The beast let out a cry that turned into a long wail as Max watched the wildfire begin to grow, spreading in every direction, consuming the flesh it touched, always spreading and preventing the dragon from being able to heal.

Now.

Even with his arm still nothing but bone, Max moved quickly, putting his hand on the core and willed it to his storage.

It vanished, the light of the beast's stomach turning as bright as the sun. The spell grew outward, encircling him and creating a growing space for him to fly in.

We need to get out of here. Your arm is slowly regrowing, but we cannot stay here.

[Dimensional Space - Blocked]

Cursing under his breath, Max wondered if there would be a floor on which he could use the spell again. Knowing the tower was blocking it now made him angry.

Can we cut our way through the spell?

No. We’ll do it another way. Be ready.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Haste]

[Phasing]

He shot outward, nervous when his body passed through the glowing edges of the spell. Max thought he could feel it trying to touch him for a moment, but they were gone, back into the light of the tower floor.

Bekat was flailing in the air, wings beating irregularly as it tried to endure what was afflicting it.

“I warned you!” Max shouted as Bob flew him close to the dragon’s head. “You should have listened.”

Another cry of pain came and Max laughed as the dragon started to descend, those black eyes getting dimmer each second.

Bekat crashed into the ground, sending up a massive cloud of dust.

Returning to his friends, Max saw the looks they gave him and felt the heal from Batrire.

“Your arm!” Tanila shouted. “Why is it not healing?!”

He didn’t know and Bob wasn’t telling him anything, but the heal hadn’t done anything to help his recovery.

More spells came and their healer cursed each time it had no impact.

“What did you do?” Fowl asked, his head constantly swiveling between looking at him and the dragon writhing on the ground.

“Cut my way to its stomach. Cast my new spell and took its core,” Max replied. “The spell did this.”

He could sense their hearts racing and saw the look Tanila couldn’t hide. He knew exactly why she looked afraid.

If she had this spell and cast it. What would have happened to her?

Nothing good. The power of the spell is feared as you can see. That dragon is being eaten away from the inside. By the looks of it, there will be nothing to harvest.

Because of the spell or because I cast it?

“Drink this,” Cordellia said, holding a blue potion before his face.

“What–”

“Drink it!”

Nodding, he took it, pulled out the stopper with his teeth and drained it.

Warmth filled his stomach and then his left arm erupted in agony.

Flesh grew and was removed. Over and over it happened. Whatever the potion tried to fix, the spell was still fighting it.

“It’s slowing down, look!” Fowl said.

Forcing himself to ignore the pain of his body trying to heal, Max turned and saw that massive sections of Bekat’s scales were missing, the wildfire having eaten them.

Now the spell seemed to be dimming, going out, and the destruction of the corpse was slowed.

Half a minute later, less than a third of the dragon survived the spell, the light fading completely. The second it did, his arm burned as it had when he cast the spell, muscle and flesh regrowing in a heartbeat.

“What was that potion?”

“Basically one of a kind. Some troll potion with something else,” their ranger replied. “Tom gave it to me this week. Said it was a gift he picked up recently. Would regrow anything… or so he said.”

Max frowned and sighed.

“Thank you for using it on me, though I’m sorry it didn’t work.”

“It wasn’t the potion or Batrire’s spells that failed,” Tanila said. “It was the wildfire. Somehow, there is a connection between it and whatever you used it on. Until it runs out, you won’t be able to heal the injury it causes.”

“Well that sucks,” Fowl muttered. “Still… you just soloed a dragon, Max. The biggest fricking dragon I’ve ever seen… well… besides the one…”

Everyone’s mood shifted as they all came up and gave him a pat on the back or arm.

“That’s our Max,” Cordellia said. “Carrying us through the tower again.”

Links

//[2025-08-05 9:59]

[None]

[F8]58/526(1) Chapter 526 - The Power of Wildfire

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2486521/chapter-526-the-power-of-wildfire; [F8]58/526(1[this.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:09,=1.1 2025-08-04 11:52], [word.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:09],[Wayback_first2025-08-04 11:52], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 10:37], [publish2025-08-02 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-08-02 16:00])Chapter 526 - The Power of Wildfire - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 526 - The Power of Wildfire

Max struggled to comprehend how little of Bekat had survived the wildfire spell.

If his core hadn’t been taken, would he have survived?

Most likely. I’m not certain how much damage a dragon can sustain from within. It’s different than the outer area. Complete destruction of one's heart is impossible for most to recover from. The fact that you can survive having your head chopped off and be back up in less than half a minute was not something I had anticipated us willing to attempt.

The cost was worth it, though.

I’m not arguing that point; I'm just stating. It also begs the question of what happens if someone cuts off half your head. How would your brain handle that kind of damage? To think it would be just as before seems impossible yet there are creatures and beings on other worlds who can create an exact copy of themselves with the same memories and knowledge.

How does that work? I mean, how would you know which one is the real one?

Bob laughed and Max sighed, his mind trying to wrap his head around everything.

“So, you're going to tell us what you got for killing the boss?” Fowl asked.

Blinking, he looked at his dwarven friend.

“Uh…”

Glancing up where notifications usually appeared, he noticed some waiting to be read.

Did you know about those?

I did. It appears you have become so strong with that artifact, you didn’t even notice when the dragon died, and you gained those.

That’s because I was distracted by my arm being just bones. When were you going to tell me?

Laughter reverberated in his mind again.

I figured you would notice it eventually.

[100 Strength Consumed]

[100 Dexterity Consumed]

[100 Constitution Consumed]

[100 Intelligence Consumed]

[100 Wisdom Consumed]

[33 Skills Consumed]

[31 Skills Unable to Be Converted or Do not Match Entity Type]

[Consume has Successfully Consumed a Skill]

[Would you like to learn [Illusionary Magic]?]

[Yes / No]

[Consume has Successfully Converted and Consumed a Skill]

[Would you like to learn [Wyrm’s Legacy]?]

[Yes / No]

“You did gain stuff, didn’t you?” Fowl asked.

“Yeah… I did,” Max replied. “I was so distracted by the fact I had no real left arm that I missed seeing the notifications or even feeling the usual cold chill.”

“Dang. Is that good or bad?”

Shrugging, Max wasn’t sure how to answer that one.

“I’ll have to try and find out the next time it happens. Maybe that time I won’t be missing an arm.”

Fowl gave him a gentle tap and winked.

“For a moment, I had considered trying to chop your shoulder off and see if it would then start to grow. Everything else the team was trying didn’t work, so what did I have to lose?”

Max shoved his friend and laughed.

“Absolutely nothing. Only I would lose something, just my shoulder. So next time you can try that.”

“Next time,” scoffed Fowl. “Now then, what did you get?”

“Two skills. Illusionary Magic and Wyrm’s Legacy. I haven’t clicked yes yet, so I’m unsure what they do.”

“Did you say illusionary magic?” Tanila asked. “From the dragon?”

“Yeah. Is it good?”

“Depends on how one uses it and the rank. A master illusionist is a dangerous foe. You’ll never see them coming, walk off a cliff, or find yourself traveling in the wrong direction and never know it. You’d probably be fine because of your sonar skill.”

As the team gathered around, Max clicked yes on the first option.

[Illusionary Magic Acquired - Legendary]

His mouth dropped as he read the notification.

“That can’t be good… or well bad,” Fowl said.

[Skill Description - Illusionary Magic]

*****

Illusionary Magic - Legendary Skill: The user masters the art of creating illusions that can fool most creatures and beings. Illusions can cover up to five miles, transforming the landscape into anything the user desires. Those who are strong enough of mind may sense that the reality around them is not real and break free from it. Physical and magical pain may also free the individual from the illusion.

The user may also leave an area under a permanent illusion, provided they supply enough mana to the spell daily. If the user is killed, all illusions will be immediately dispelled.

*****

Smiling, Max began to cast the spell for the first time.

[Illusionary Magic]

He made a clone of himself over himself, while stealthing.

Fowl and the others were frowning as his illusion stood there, not saying a word.

Moving behind his friend, Max grabbed the dwarf from behind and lifted him over his head.

“HOLY ELF TITS!”

As his stealth broke, Max started laughing, his dwarven friend flailing above.

“Gods, this is going to be awful,” Cordellia muttered. “Just what we need, giving Max more ways to play tricks on us.”

“Put me down!”

Dismissing the illusion, Max set his friend down, dodging as their warrior took a few swipes at him.

“So help me, I’m going to shove my foot so far up your arse when you’re not looking!” Fowl shouted. “You know I hate being picked up.”

“Which is exactly why I did that,” Max replied. “Imagine the fun you and I can have at the Faction. The things we can do to Everett and Tom.”

The scowl that had covered that hairy face vanished, replaced by an evil grin as the dwarf rubbed his hands together.

“Oh… that will be fun.”

Batrire groaned and rubbed her eyes.

“Dear Ockrim, help me.”

“So what about the second?”

“One second,” Max replied.

[Wyrm’s Legacy Acquired - Common]

*****

Wyrm’s Legacy - Common Skill: The user has unlocked an ancient technique that allows them to transform temporarily into a dragon. Size and duration are limited by skill rank. The more dragons the user kills, the stronger this rank can grow. As the ability improves, other draconic abilities may be acquired. Dragons can sense this power and may react differently. The current size is limited to an eggling for up to fifteen minutes. The current Dragon type that may be duplicated is green. Cooldown is once every twenty-four hours.

*****

“Oh no, he’s smiling like that again,” Cordellia said.

“Maaaaxxxx. Don’t do anything stupid,” Tanila informed him.

“Trust me, this will be worth it.”

Any idea how my equipment might impact this ability?

Not a clue. I’m curious myself about how this works. Transformational magic is strong and it was the only skill I could convert. This also means that Rakonath should acquire the ability at some point, according to Aerthen.

Taking a few steps back, Max stored all his equipment, trading out his gear for a simple robe.

“Okay, now, I have no idea what’s going to happen, but don’t do anything stupid like attack me.”

Eyebrows furled and a few frowned as he winked and activated the ability.

[Wyrm’s Legacy]

He felt his body begin to change. Wings were growing from his back as he bent over, and claws and talons were growing from his hands and feet.

There wasn’t any pain, yet the sensation was awkward, feeling his skin turn hard and scaly.

“Max?”

Tanila’s tone carried the concern she must be feeling as she kept blinking.

“It’s me,” Max said, surprised by how his voice sounded.

“He even sounds like a dragon,” Fowl said. “It has that gruff tone.”

“Come and touch me,” Max said as he bent his neck, gazing over his new body.

The green scales were glistening as Bekat’s had. Each one looked vibrant and healthy. A tail moved as he thought about it, and it took some effort for Max to move his wings how he wanted them to.

It’s a lot harder than I expected to do this. I’m assuming I could fly using this form.

You know what assume spells. Perhaps Rakonath could teach you.

You can reset this ability? Right?

Bob said nothing and then a sense of frustration came through their bond.

No. It is different than the others. Similar to how I learned I can’t decrease the cooldown on Wildfire.

Seriously?

A hand came near his neck and Max turned, almost knocking Tanila over.

“Sorry, I… don’t know how to use this body.”

Nodding, she reached out and put her hand against his scales, causing a sensation of bliss to flood his mind.

“Would you… scratch me?” Max asked.

“Eww!” Cordellia cried out. “Please don’t ever say that again.”

Fowl and Batrire both nodded in agreement.

Laughing, Tanila began scratching, and a trill came from inside.

Please tell her to stop that!

“You… have to stop… please…”

Each word was hard to say through the pleasure he felt, and Max saw Tanila’s cheeks turn red.

“Uh… did you like… You know,” Fowl asked.

“I swear if this is how Rakonath feels when I scratch his scales, I’m never doing that again,” Cordellia said with a shudder. “I feel dirty over here, and I didn’t do a thing.”

What was so bad?

When you and her *make love* as you call it, I can easily block that out, yet at that moment, it didn’t just flow through you. It somehow… radiated through my entire being. I do not like how that felt at all. Cordellia said it best.

Laughing, Max thrum louder when he realized he made the same sound as his dragon.

“Gods, this went south fast,” their healer stated.

Canceling the ability, Max stood up, feeling a slight breeze blowing, and seeing his friends turning away.

Immediately, he equipped his gear, glad to have tried this with a simple robe, even though it didn’t survive the transformation.

“Oh look, a chest,” Cordellia said as they all looked away.

“Thank Ockrim!” exclaimed Fowl. “Let’s go see what the rest of us get.”

As the other three walked away, Tanila was grinning, grabbing his hand.

“Was it really that different?”

“Yes! Bob asked me to tell you to stop. Even he could feel it.”

Her face returned to the red apple color as she stepped back.

“Okay, well, that just ended my offering to try that with you again.”

Sighing, he moved and pulled her close.

“It’s okay. He overlooks the other stuff.”

***

“What’s this?” Fowl asked, holding up the pointy piece of crystal. “Just five of these in the chest? Where’s the loot? The potions? The gear?!”

“It’s the tower,” Batrire replied, storing hers. “Perhaps the next time we see Chromie he’ll tell us what they are.”

Blowing a raspberry, their warrior pouted.

“So we want to head home and try the next floor tomorrow?”

“Do you need a day for cooldowns?” Tanila asked.

“Yeah. Just one skill though. We can try tomorrow afternoon if that works.”

“Fine by me,” Fowl stated. “I need to go drown my sorrows at what I just experienced.”

“And I need to take a bath and wash away what I heard,” Cordellia added.

***

WHAT DID YOU DO?! *!*

Rakonath’s voice thundered in his head the moment they appeared outside the tower.

Hold up! Don’t yell, what do you mean?

Come to the Faction grounds immediately!

A little panic began to set in, and Max motioned to everyone.

“Quick, touch me, we need to get back to the faction.”

At first, he got a few glances from his friends, but seeing his face, they did as he asked and Max transported them to the spot he knew his dragon was waiting.

The oversized dragon shook as soon as they arrived, almost vibrating with energy.

“Rakonath what is wrong?!” Max asked, moving toward his dragon.

“What did you do? How did you do it?!”

“Do what? I’m lost. All I did was…” his voice trailed off and Max cocked his head, studying his friend.

“What happened while I was in the tower?”

“My skill! I got my transforming skill! Look!”

The silver dragon stopped moving, his body beginning to shimmer and glow. Seconds passed as he shrank; a moment later, the silver dragon rose from his kneeling position, revealing his humanoid form.

“Uh…” Max started, his voice lost at what was before him.

“Those are the biggest pair–” Cordellia said.

“Ladies! Avert your eyes!” Fowl shouted, spinning on all three women who were not turning away.

“Who knew Rakonath was so… big?” Cordellia whispered, causing the other two to laugh.

“What are they talking about?” Rakonath asked, glancing down at his body. “I’m barely taller than you, Max.”

Clearing his throat, Max summoned a blanket and handed it to his dragon.

“So… your uh… manhood… or dragonhood is showing. It’s why we wear clothes?”

“This?” Rakonath asked as he reached down and grabbed it. “It’s not that big right now. I mean, I know it will get a lot bigger.”

Max was so shocked that he couldn’t react, and the sound of their archer fainting and hitting the ground made them turn.

“Gods, I’m going drinking… I can’t handle today,” Fowl muttered, walking toward the Faction house.

“Looks like I’m going to have to train a dragon,” Max muttered. “Step one, what to wear, and step two, not talking like that.”

Links

//[2025-08-05 10:37]

[None]

[F8]59/527(1) Chapter 527 - Elves and Dragons

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488674/chapter-527-elves-and-dragons; [F8]59/527(1[this.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:10,=1.1del 2025-08-04 11:55], [word.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:10],[Wayback_first=1.1del 2025-08-04 11:55], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 11:09], [publish2025-08-03 16:00],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:00])Chapter 527 - Elves and Dragons - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 527 - Elves and Dragons

“Am I sitting too close?” Rakonath asked, shifting on the couch next to Cordellia.

“Oh no, you’re fine where you are,” she replied, scooting closer and squeezing his arm. “That silver hair really looks good on you.”

Tom shook his head and Max chuckled.

“I’m not sure what surprises me more,” Everett said. “That your dragon, which I still struggle with, can transform to look like us, or that your ranger may need someone to spray her with water.”

Max shrugged, feeling Tanila’s grip tighten on his arm.

“I’m not getting involved with that,” he replied. “She’s a grown… elf. He’s a dragon. I got nothing.”

The Faction leader just grinned. “Still, he is impressive. What’s the plan with him and your party?”

“Not sure. I think putting Rakonath in my dimensional space is an option again, but the past floors in the tower haven’t allowed me to summon it. So he could come with us, but if he can’t get out to help us fight, I’m not sure it would be worth it.”

Everett nodded and took a sip from his drink. “I heard a dwarf is drinking more ale than usual. Any reason for that?”

“Oh that’s just Fowl,” Tanila chimed in. “He’s pouting because of how things went today. Not what he was hoping for, so his answer is to drink.”

“And Batrire?”

“She went to the spa she likes. I’d join her but magical mud or not, I will stop doing those for a bit as this one keeps moving and growing. I expected a quicker time but not this quick.”

“Is everything okay?” Tom asked, both older men leaning forward.

“Oh we’re both fine. Trust me. Max makes sure we’re both healthy as can be.”

A small sigh of relief came from Everett as he smiled at them.

“Well that’s good. So you’re on to the next floor already? I mean, not that I expected less from you all, but the city is abuzz. Many are placing wagers on when they expect you all to defeat the tower.”

“I heard,” Max replied. “I also am not a huge fan of the current haircut that is all the rage.”

Tom choked on his drink, having started to take a sip as Max spoke.

“Yes… There has been a bright glow about the city lately. Some barber shops have reported an increase in customers lately. Men and women.”

Unable to hold back the groan that escaped, Max waved off the look that came from Rakonath.

“I’m going to head down to the crafting room,” he stated. “I know you’re interested in seeing what I do there. Want to join me?”

“Yes!”

Everyone but their ranger laughed at how loud Rakonath shouted, jumping to his feet and almost yanking Cordellia with him.

***

“I’m… jealous,” his dragon said as he studied the glowing dragon core on the stone floor. “To have this much power and yet have it stolen… That is a reminder that others like you could easily crush me if they desired.”

Max nodded, turning his head to see Rakonath leaning against it. He was barely as tall as the orb, both hands and his cheek pressed against the smooth edge.

“Well, I’ll be honest, as much as I might have wanted the rewards to go differently, the spell I got isn’t one I expect most to use inside a dragon. Still, I asked you to join me as I prepare to do a few things with it.”

“Now that you don’t have to worry about the tooth my Father gave you?”

Max nodded and pointed at the four weapons on the stone table. A sword with runes etched in it, a purple blade, and an orange hilt was ready for what he was attempting. In the blade was a hole where the objects he was about to create would go.

That is the ugliest weapon I have ever seen.

Looks don’t matter. You and I both know the power of the materials.

Bob did something like a grunt and went silent as Max ran his hand along the next weapon.

A spear with a bone shaft, carved from one of Igarra’s teeth, had a pink blade attached to it. Near the base was another hole the same size as the one as the sword.

“How many dragon weapons are you going to create?”

“As many as I can,” he replied. “You and I both know the power they contain. Aerthen herself said that the stronger the dragon, the greater the weapon's potential. I was only able to salvage one tooth from Bekat. The rest were… ruined somehow by the wildfire even though they weren’t touched by it.”

“Hearing about it makes me nervous,” Rakonath said, finally releasing his embrace on the dragon core. “To know it caused you that much damage… That means there must be even stronger spells out there.”

Max set down the hammer he had been inspecting, putting the weapon down next to the spear. It was crafted from one complete tooth; the only lines present were the ones he had added for grip or magical power. Unless one looked at the top of the hammer head, they wouldn’t see the missing area, a small spherical shape waiting to be filled.

Picking up the wooden staff next to it, he shrugged.

“Everything gets worse. I mean, I’ve been cut in half, had my head chopped off, body melted, and that boss on the 87th floor reflected my strike back at me. I’m just glad Bob could sense something was off before I struck it and used all my skills.”

A grunt came from Tanila, and Max saw her frowning.

“Yes?”

“Just remembering how that looked as a geyser of blood went out in every direction from you,” she replied. “Not something one’s wife wants ever to see.”

Having inspected the staff again, Max traded it for the last weapon, which had been almost impossible to create, as the dragon tooth he had used fought him the entire time he had crafted it.

The bow was made from two of the *smaller* , more curved teeth, carved down to make the bow's upper and lower ends. Inside the grip was a smaller hole, which he hoped would work for his plan. Both bone parts were fused to the metal he had traded for in one of the bazaars they had been through. He knew it would be perfect for the dwarf ranger in the faction.

When Everett asked me to make a bow this size, I thought he was joking at first.

Not many dwarves go that path, but the ones that do often stand out.

I’m not sure how they stand out… they would have problems shooting over anyone else.

Weakness makes one stronger. They learn to adapt. You know that. I’d be more afraid of a dwarf archer than an elven one if they were both on the same tower floor.

Nodding, Max set the bow down, knowing Bob was right.

“Alright, I think I’m ready for this. Are you sure you want to be here for the next part?”

Rakonath chuckled and nodded.

“This was supposed to be something you tested with my core. I don’t want to miss out on what all that fuss was about.”

Max couldn’t help but frown as the memory of that incident flashed through his mind.

“Not my best moment by a long shot… stupid for trusting that gnome and even dumber for believing I could stop anyone.”

When neither Rakonath nor Tanila responded, he moved to the machine in the corner of the room.

The crystal that powered it from the tower floor with the goblin and the giant clockwork hummed.

Everett had to build extra protection and add other spells to ward the area around where he was crafting. The first time he had taken it out and hooked it up, every dwarf in a mile radius had made their way toward the Faction grounds, no one sure why they were coming other than drawn to it.

“Flip that lever,” Max said as he sensed the power within the equipment he had tinkered with reach the level he needed.

Rakonath nodded and flipped the lever that he had pointed at.

Two cables that were attached to the device he had stolen from the tower pulsed with energy, running to a table where five different orbs sat.

Max moved to the dragon core, took a deep breath, and closed his eyes.

I’m ready.

Bob worked with him, retrieving the metal he had stored in his inventory, causing the lattice he had created to surround the core.

Two more cables came with couplers attached to them and connected to the lattice.

It seems like cheating when one knows how to do it easily.

Easily… like we didn’t almost blow up a planet or lose Rakonath’s core.

A chuckle came from his dragon, and Max couldn’t help but smile, knowing his friend could hear the conversation.

When the pieces came together, Max infused his mana into the lattice.

Light began to flood the room as the metal glowed, turning white and then a deep red as the dragon core changed colors.

Without waiting another second, he moved to the table, flipping a tiny switch as the cable hummed and vibrated, power threatening to cause it to explode if left there too long.

The first core immediately absorbed the awaiting energy and the black sphere turned red, matching the color of the dragon core.

Almost a minute passed before it began to hum, and Max knew it was reaching the limits of its capacity.

I’m surprised it held that much.

Not replying, Max flipped the switch and the power moved to the second orb.

After repeating the process five times, he held his hand up and then dropped it, causing Rakonath to flip the lever. The red light in the room faded before winking out.

“I can finally see again,” Tanila groaned. “Even with my eyes almost shut it was too much.”

“Which is why I had mine closed,” Max replied.

“I really don’t think it was that bad,” Rakonath said. “Then again, my eyes have stared at the sun for hours. Something you all cannot do.”

Ignoring his dragon’s statement, Max moved and turned off the device from the tower floor and stored the crystal after it stopped radiating power as it had been and got back to work. He only had so much time before they would return to the tower and he wanted to get these five weapons done before then.

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“Impossible,” Tom muttered. “I mean… not that I doubted it… but five weapons… all like this?!”

“I promised you weapons that would be useful to the Faction and I’m certain these ones will help for a while to come.”

Both men snorted and Everett just shook his head.

“You do realize that these weapons are something a King or Queen might have,” the Faction leader asked. “I cannot believe I’m about to give these to a party like they’re nothing.”

Shaking his head, Max tapped the sword both men had inspected.

“These aren’t nothing and you and I both know it. With these, Dexic and her party can push past limits that might otherwise hold them back. You and I both know I can’t share any details, but with what’s coming, they will need to grind for at least a few months in the tower's mid-fifties.”

“She’s anxious and ready for that next step. Also, a bit frustrated that you can’t return to help her on the 60th floor,” Tom said. “Still, you know she’s grateful.”

Max nodded and ran his hand along the blade once more.

To think we can make something like these… All I need is a little more time to craft something for my sister. No one else's, not even Batrire’s weapon, would be hard to upgrade.

Seems funny to think that getting 100 points in three stats is not even worth considering the time or effort to make everyone in your party something.

A true testament to just how much harder the tower is as you go.

Links

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[None]

[F8]60/528(1) Chapter 528 - Floor 92

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488782/chapter-528-floor-92; [F8]60/528(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 10:23,=1 2025-08-04 11:54], [word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 10:23],[Wayback_first=1 2025-08-04 11:54], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 11:22], [publish2025-08-03 16:45],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:45])Chapter 528 - Floor 92 - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Hey Everyone!! Big DAY TODAY!! The rest of book 9 HITS RR today!

Book 10 Will start later this month (I dropped the first chapter on my Patreon[L1] but it won't officially start till 8/11 on Patreon) Book 10 will probably hit RR about 2 weeks or so after that (Moving to a 5 chapter week).

Thank you again for the love and support! You can find book 9 on Amazon here[L2]!

Also if you like the audio - Book 7 Just dropped[L3] and Book 8 hits in September!!

Chapter 528 - Floor 92

“It looks like an undead boss,” Fowl stated. “I mean, I can see through it.”

Less than sixty seconds remained on the timer counting down and Max stopped complaining.

“It’s fine,” Tanila said. “So your dimensional space is locked. Rakonath will be fine.”

“Buffing, want the big one or not?” Batrire asked.

“No, save it,” Max replied. “We’ll have to see what this one does. I’m surprised that this one’s only twenty-five feet tall.”

“Yeah, and you can’t phase into it and kill it from the inside,” Cordellia teased. “Guess you’ll have to fight it the good old-fashioned way.”

Max nodded and gazed across the small tower floor.

Less than half a mile wide in diameter, the graveyard was illuminated by a yellow moon, casting shadows everywhere on the grey ground. Different tombstones rose were scattered all over, yet in the middle was the boss, a ghostly knight that glowed blue and was transparent. Their ranger pointed out it had a halo but that it was cracked, a few pieces missing and the sword it wielded was taller than all of them. Its shield covered over half its body, glowing runes that made Max a little concerned about what it could do.

We’ll go slow, test it out, and see what we can do. Remember, the tower is adapting and learning, it appears. Your ranger is right, you can’t phase into this one.

And wildfire won’t work, most likely as it’s not really alive.

Correct. Now then, let’s do what we do best. Kill things.

Grunting, Max cracked his neck and pointed at the boss with his weapon, causing it to grow another two feet.

“I’ll grab its agro and test it out, Fowl, be ready. We won’t know if anything comes from the graveyard until it actually does.”

Their warrior nodded as he rotated his shoulders.

“I’ve got them. Just let me know when it’s time for me to have some fun.”

Smiling, Max raced forward, the timer vanishing as he crossed the small crystal circle.

Empty sockets in the plate helm glowed green and a green nova of magical energy rushed out from around it.

Jumping into the air, Max flew over the ground when a notification appeared.

[Cursed Benediction]

What the…

[Regeneration]

His chest tightened, and every bone in his body suddenly ached.

It’s an aura. Your health is slowly decreasing.

Max glanced at his health bar and saw that the small drain was almost impossible to notice; his healing ability was keeping up. The closer he got to the boss, the more it drained.

So it needs to be a fast fight!

[Ultimate Form]

Max flew at the boss, thrusting his spear while Bob sent wind blades at its back.

The ghostly knight blocked his attack, swinging its blade at him.

A wail came as the sword struck his bone shield, yet the attack didn’t pass through.

Max could feel his body growing tired, the aura draining not only health but stamina as well.

They traded blows over and over, each unable to get past the defenses. Every spell that Bob sent did nothing, striking the ghostly armor and either dissipating or unable to penetrate the protective plate covering.

Go full offense. Let’s test the barrier.

[Personal Barrier]

Max let an attack at his leg get past his shield, the blade striking the protective ability and bouncing off.

It cried out in some wail and Max ignored it, swapping out the shield for his other weapon, going on the offensive.

[Power Strike]

[Ghost Strike]

[Berserker]

[Rampage]

[Demonic Teleportation]

His blades struck against the back of the boss’s hip, cutting or appearing to pass through the plate armor it wore. No blood or any liquid came, yet it howled, spinning around toward him.

Max used his advantage of speed, staying behind it, landing blow after blow, hearing the boss wail again, yet he couldn't tell if any damage was being done at all.

A fifth of his health was gone, the aura doing more damage than his regeneration could handle.

He saw Batrire's health dip slightly and felt magic wash over him.

Pain came as the heal she sent struck, and a third of Max's health vanished, causing the boss to glow blue.

"DON'T HEAL!"

The sword came at him as he stumbled, trying to ignore the ache that seemed to grow deeper inside his body, urging him just to lie down and hope it would go away.

Healing spells, they hurt you!

But regeneration isn't–

Max stopped asking questions as Bob directed their path. He moved away from the group, flying up and away, luring the boss away from everyone.

We won't have a lot of time. I'm sure whatever damage we did was mitigated by Batrire's healing and your health drain.

Is it draining my life for itself?!

Yes. I've been studying it as we fought, not focusing on offensive spells, as they've done nothing. This is an ability similar to that one of the boy you fought in the arena. Only this one is much stronger, and I cannot resist it.

Now be ready. Once we move out of its range, I'm certain it will move toward your friends. We should heal as soon as we escape the aura.

Ignoring how Bob had said *should,* Max studied the boss as they led it to the far side of the graveyard where the ground ended, a giant space of emptiness beyond the grey dirt and land.

Flying upward as fast as possible, Max found that the aura had a limit of about two hundred yards. His regeneration immediately kicked in, and his hitpoints skyrocketed to full health in half a dozen seconds.

As Bob had thought, the moment he was out of the aura, it turned, racing toward his friends.

[Haste]

The knight turned as he came at it, unable to get its shield up in time to stop his attack.

Both weapons transformed into spears, driving them into the area between its helm and armor near its neck.

They sank into the ghostly body, each of them at least four feet deep and then Max had to escape as his Haste ran out and the boss’s sword came at him.

“FOWL COME CLOSER!”

He kept the boss turned toward him, ignoring the pain as their warrior got close.

When Fowl was in range of the aura, the boss shuddered and Max watched as his friend’s hitpoints decreased.

That aura won’t save him.

No but it will do damage. I need a minute, we all need a minute.

Dodging a shield slam and a sword that followed right after, Max sliced his arm and cast the spell he wanted.

[Demonic Summoning]

The space that formed looked different in the moon's light, and the boss’s next attack slowed, stopping as the fractured world appeared.

Before him, Max saw the black door appear, and the grotesque shapes that decorated it began to move, twisting and turning before it swung open.

As they did, Sog stood in the middle, flanked by a trio of demons kneeling with their heads down.

“Max, it has been a while. You must be doing well, as I sense the power coming through our bond!”

Smiling, Max motioned to the trio around his demonic friend.

“It appears you are growing stronger as well. How are things in your world?”

A chuckle came from Sog, who motioned to the trio still in their same positions.

“I cannot complain. Now then, tell me, what can I do to help?”

Max pointed at the ghostly sword that was frozen behind the fractured wall.

“I’m facing some kind of ghost boss right now. It has an aura that drains my health and heals it. The closer I get, the worse it is, and even my healing isn’t enough to keep up with the drain. What is worse is if my healer heals, I take damage while I’m in whatever aura it has.”

Sog frowned and moved closer to the boss's location, snapping his fingers, causing the doors to slam shut. He then turned his full attention to studying it through the kaleidoscope area.

“Those are not from our domain, yet there is one who has something similar to what you described. Are you able to damage it enough before it kills you?”

“I’m not sure. My healer tried to heal me and I believe it healed the boss. So I had to retreat and heal on my own. My dwarven friend is behind it right now, and his

reflective aura damages the boss. Unfortunately, he can’t be healed while taking damage, and I’m not sure if he is doing more damage than the boss heals from injuring Fowl.”

His demon friend shook his black head and Max smiled, only now realizing he was only two feet taller than his friend because of the Ultimate Form.

“You’ve grown way more than I realized until now,” Max stated.

Laughing, Sog nodded.

“I wondered for a moment about yourself and then remembered you had that ability. I prefer to stay smaller as it enables me to react faster and not be as big of a target. Besides, I’m not facing many challenges right now unless I initiate the fight. But back to the question at hand, I think your friend should be coming out on the better end of the deal. If I am correct, his damage should mitigate most of the healing the boss receives, most likely managing to damage it. The problem is when full parties are in range of the aura.”

“So we are hurting it, just not quickly.”

Once again, Sog nodded.

“In time, if you can manage to escape and heal, you should be able to wear it down. Though I’m certain it has other abilities that have not yet been revealed, it wouldn't seem right for a creature like this to have one or two. What floor are you on now?”

“The 92nd.”

His friend coughed and cleared his throat, his eyes turning yellow as he gazed at Max.

“You are close. Very close to finishing it. Not enough time has passed since you first summoned and now you are at the pinnacle of completing the tower. Tell me, are you willing to summon me again if you manage to defeat it?”

“Like for that fight or afterwards?”

Laughing, Sog grinned, all his teeth now on display as he patted Max’s arm

“After, I would prefer not to die so close to the end. I will come if you need me for that fight, but the little I know about the last floor is that very few make it past it. Regardless, I can help with this fight if you desire. Its aura will not bother me like it does you and I can do more damage to help defeat it.”

“I won’t turn down the aid,” he replied, holding out a hand.

As they shook, Sog laughed.

“Your hand, it’s so big.”

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The boss radiated with a yellow aura suddenly.

Max watched his hitpoints and Fowl's plummet suddenly.

"PULL BACK!" Max shouted. He noticed that Sog was clutching his left arm, having dropped the blazing black sword he had been attacking with.

It's reflecting everything! Even Fowl's aura!

As it did, the knight swung faster, its shield and weapon taking advantage of Max's weakened state, sending him flying backward through the air and missing a leg.

"Go! I got this!"

Nodding once at his demon friend, Max flew upward, summoning blocks of earth to try and slow down the boss as it turned on his ally.

How is he going to–

There was no need to finish that question as he kept his eyes focused on Sog, the demon summoning a giant black shield that absorbed the boss's attacks.

Each strike drove the demon backward, yet no sound came from the contact the boss's shield or weapon made with the defense of his friend.

Max counted the seconds as he healed, grateful that he had chosen regeneration as the ability to upgrade. It had already given him so much and continued to pay dividends.

Go all in, wait for it. Whatever it's using, the ability should wear off soon.

And if it comes back?

You'll kill yourself and your ability should prevent that. What happens then, I have no idea as we've never killed ourselves before.

The thought of doing so much damage and having it be enough to end his life was hard to comprehend. They had been wearing the boss down for almost two minutes, and now all that work had practically taken the three of them out instantly.

[All Cooldowns Reset]

They flew back at the boss, watching it continue its assault against Sog.

It felt like an eternity. Max could not do anything, just slightly out of range of the aura, as he watched his friend hide behind a shrinking black shield of ooze.

Bob summoned a fireball, pouring mana into it as they counted the seconds.

The yellow aura faded, and Max didn't hesitate.

"EVERYONE HIT IT!"

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Berserker]

[Rampage]

[Spell Burst]

[Haste]

Max streaked through the air, both weapons now a sword, bringing the pair together like scissors at the boss’s neck.

Sog’s barrier faded and the demon leapt to the side as the ghostly blade slammed into the dirt where he had been standing.

Fowl’s, Tanila’s, and Cordellia’s hitpoints decreased, but he sensed their combined attack coming.

Boss arrows, an ice spear almost as wide as the boss, and a fireball all struck as one.

Flames covered the ghostly form as Max continued to hack at it repeatedly.

The spell Tanila had sent pierced through the knight’s armor, sticking out and looking ridiculous.

Another Empowered boss arrow struck, each of them lodged between sections of the knee area where protection was weak.

Roaring, Max gave everything he had, sending out a Fire Nova and then a Frost one.

Bob continued his assault, wind blades and lightning all assaulting the ghostly figure before them.

And then Max’s next strike met no resistance, the image of the being they were fighting suddenly fading from existence.

His hitpoints climbed upward, and Max saw that everyone else was no longer taking damage.

Sog rose, rotating his left arm before retrieving his dropped swords.

“It appears you killed it,” the demon stated.

“How do you know that?”

Sog started to laugh and Max cocked his head sideways as Sog began to grow.

“Because I just got a new skill.”

Links

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[L1] https://www.patreon.com/c/AuthorShawnWilson

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0FC3LXWGR?maas=&ref=

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0FHR3WMB8

[F8]61/529(1) Chapter 529 - The Perks of Being With Max

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488783/chapter-529-the-perks-of-being-with-max; [F8]61/529(1[this.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:11,=1.1del 2025-08-04 11:53], [word.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:11],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-08-04 11:53], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 10:41], [publish2025-08-03 16:45],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:45])Chapter 529 - The Perks of Being With Max - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 529 - The Perks of Being With Max

“I’m sorry, what?” Max asked.

“I got a skill when you killed it,” Sog replied. “Cursed Benediction.”

Bob started to laugh, and Max shook his head, still confused.

“Has that ever happened before? I mean, getting a skill?”

“Only once, and that was back on that world you left me. I wasn’t sure at first but as I learned more about you, I believe it has something to do with your skill and our connection. I was a bit surprised that I got this. Usually, you take any souls and then I have to claim them but for some reason, this came straight to me.”

It is because it wasn’t a creature we could harvest, but I’m assuming he can. Hearing he can do so is a bit concerning. Our relationship seems to impact all of those you are bound with.

Rakonath and Sog are the only two.

No. Your child.

Bob’s words caused him to freeze.

“Max? Did my words cause you pain?”

Shaking his head, he saw Sog frowning, recognizing how his friend’s face looked when making that expression.

“Yes and no but not because you acquired it. It has more to do with how it affects others.”

“What affects others?” Fowl asked as the rest of his party arrived.

“Sog growing stronger. He apparently gets some perks from my skill that I didn’t know until now.”

Everyone glanced at the demon who stood there, chest puffed out, now grinning.

“What just happened?” Cordellia asked.

“I got a skill,” Sog replied.

“WHAT?!” their warrior exclaimed. “Did you get one?”

Shaking his head, Max motioned to his demonic friend.

“No. I can’t from these types but apparently, he can.”

He tried not to look at Tanila but could read her facial expressions as she bit her lip.

I have to tell her.

That is your decision. Just know that no one will be able to tell the far-reaching effects of all this right now. Only after your child is born will we be able to determine how or if I influenced them.

“Well I’m just glad this fight is over,” Batrire stated. “I was concerned we’d never kill this thing. My heart almost came out of my chest after you almost died when I healed you.”

“Yeah,” Fowl added. “I was scared I’d be left with these three women with no one to talk to about man stuff.”

“Man stuff,” Cordellia grunted. “You wouldn’t know man stuff if someone hit you in the face with it.”

As their warrior and ranger started to get into a war of jabs, Max moved to where Sog was and held out a hand.

“Thank you again for coming.”

Laughing, the demon grasped it and smiled.

“No, thank you once more for summoning me. I look forward to the next time.”

Bowing, the demon snapped his fingers, and the black doors appeared behind him, swinging open. All three of the minions that had been kneeling on the ground were still there, having not moved at all from where he had left them.

“Be safe Max. Until next time!”

When the doors shut, Tanila came close and squeezed his arm.

“You’re going to tell me what's on your mind. I can read it all across your face,” she whispered.

Nodding, Max pointed at the chest on the tower floor.

“I was planning on it. Let’s loot and see if we can get home without those two teasing each other the entire way home.”

The blue ghostly chest held only another tear-shaped crystal object for each of them and three black crystals for the Faction.

“I’m hoping these are for something nice,” Fowl muttered. “After this last fight, I could use something better against a creature like that.”

***

Tanila hadn’t said a word since he told her what he and Bob had quickly discussed.

He wanted to say more or to ask her how she felt, but he knew she needed time to process it all.

Her hand hadn’t stopped moving for more than a second as she rubbed her stomach, their child kicking every so often.

“What does he think could happen to our child?”

“Bob’s not sure. He can’t figure out what might happen to them from us being in the tower for so long. Both gods commented on that, and it confirms what he was thinking. Everything I can tell from my sonar ability is that our child is healthy and doing well. They seem like any other unborn child I’ve used my skill on.”

“And how many other pregnant women have you inspected?”

Seeing her eyes narrow and lips tighten, Max held up his hands.

“Only from a distance. I just wanted to compare. Trust me, I only have eyes for you.”

She sighed and then took his outstretched hand.

“I know. I just like to give you a hard time.”

Pulling her close, Max wrapped his arms around her and stood there, letting his skill show him just how healthy their child appeared to be.

All he could do was smile as its heart beat steadily.

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Cordellia shouted as she let loose a volley of arrows, each of them the boss ones she had been storing for a while.

Death rained down upon the illusions, destroying all but the original one.

“FINISH IT!” Max shouted at Tanila.

She let loose her largest ice spear yet as his ice storm descended.

The boss screamed, her voice a pained cry as she cast another spell.

“TAUNTING!!” Fowl shouted, hiding behind his shield as another Fire Nova washed over him.

Hurry!

Max didn’t need Bob’s reminder. They had fought the pair of fire bosses twice now. Killing one and not the other caused whichever one was alive to go berserk and, after ten seconds, bring the dead one back to life.

This one was much easier, smaller, and less armored than the molten armor and weapons mountain.

Unable to dodge or create more illusions of herself, the flaming elemental woman couldn’t dance away to safety.

He matched Tanila’s spell, sending an ice spear at the boss’s head.

[Spell Burst]

Two pieces of ice, the size of a large horse, impaled the boss. One was in the chest, the other through its head. Slowly, the flames began to die out and the entire tower floor went silent.

No longer did the large vents spew out fire and stone.

The lava pools grew still and the heat that radiated off the floors vanished.

Once again… no abilities.

The tower learns. It is trying to cull us or keep us weak.

Max grunted and waited for the others to gather closer.

Both corpses turned to stone and then shattered, returning to dust as the three and four-story-tall pair vanished.

“Whoever those belongs to needs a kick in the arse,” Fowl muttered. “What is with all these undying or respawning bosses?!”

Max shrugged and patted his friend on the shoulder.

“It doesn’t matter. We just beat the 95th tower floor. You, my friend, are the reason why.”

Blowing a raspberry, Fowl waved off that comment.

“Please, we know you and the others did all the work. I just stood there and got my body beat on.”

“But none of us can take it like you do.”

“Oh, he can take it,” Batrire said as she arrived. “All I care about is whether his beard got singed. I spent good money on that beard oil, and I’m tired of how short it's gotten.”

Fowl pulled out his beard and let her inspect it, giving him an approving nod.

“Glad to see it actually worked.”

“Who would believe there’s such a thing as fire and acid-proof beard oil?” Cordellia asked. “We’ve got a bald epidemic back home, and these two are worried about keeping hair on their faces.”

Both Dwarves ignored their archer as Max felt pressure leaving his body.

We did it… 95 floors.

Yes. Only five more to go. What lies beyond is the real question.

“There’s the chest,” Tanila said as she came near them, holding her growing stomach with one hand.

“You going to make it?” Batrire asked. “I mean, I know how to help a woman give birth, but I’m not sure I want to do it mid-battle.”

“I’m fine. It’s just that this child starts kicking like crazy anytime a boss is defeated. Part of me wonders if Max somehow got a ball in there while I was asleep and gave it to them.”

Everyone chuckled, but Max knew what she was implying.

She told him about what she had kept secret.

Unlike Fowl, she didn’t have to check the experience to see if the boss was dead. Their child would tell her by how it reacted.

“Anyone wanna bet it's a crystal like all the rest?” Cordellia asked.

“No, that’s like easy money,” Fowl replied as the pair moved to check out the loot.

“You sure you’re okay?” Batrire asked, coming up beside Tanila. “I can see it written all over your face. This one was pretty painful.”

“It was,” their mage admitted. “Still, I’m fine. Even now they’ve settled down. So let’s go see what we got and then return to the faction house. I for one need a bath.”

“Make that two,” their healer replied, holding onto Tanila’s arm and walking with her to where the chest was.

You’re here. If something happens, I know that she will be alright. Your team won’t let anything happen to her.

Max grunted to himself and moved to join the rest.

I know. You know what worries me the most.

Bob didn’t reply as they were both anxious about what lay on the 100th floor.

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“Holy elf tits,” Fowl muttered. “Where–”

“Please refrain from such language.”

Max and the others turned around, finding themselves in a forest. A familiar voice came from behind them.

Chromie was tending a tree, his large metallic fingers adjusting limbs. Each time he touched a limb, it grew and moved in the direction his finger pushed it.

“Where are we?” Cordellia asked, mimicking their warrior.

“The 96th floor. A special place and one you need to spend some time on. Come, follow me. Let the air and the world rejuvenate you.”

Max took a deep breath and felt his fatigue and frustration gradually fade.

“Does… does anyone else feel… like every breath is better than the one before?” Batrire asked.

Murmurs and head bobs came from the rest as they stood there, taking deep breaths repeatedly.

“Come, we need to walk. Fear not, there is no fighting, and where we are is a garden. Tended by those like me and made to be a place of healing. Had any of you lost a limb, here it would be regrown. Or perhaps an eye was lost, it too would be replaced.”

“So… this is like a floor to prepare for what’s coming?” Tanila asked.

“In some ways, yes, and in other ways no,” Chromie replied. “For now, simply walk with me. If possible, do not talk. Just witness what is here and allow yourselves a moment of peace.”

Grunts came, and before Fowl could say something, Max motioned to Tanila to take his hand and started walking down the path he pointed at.

All around them, myriad creatures played and raced along the ground. Animals that looked like squirrels vanished and reappeared, their purple fur disappearing as they climbed trees.

Birds above them sang in a song that somehow made a single melody, lulling their mind to relax and not be anxious.

Is this a threat?

Bob said nothing momentarily as Max continued walking next to Tanila.

I do not think so. I cannot sense anything evil or… wrong. It would appear that your host and the tower have brought you somewhere where combat may not occur. I’m not certain what kind of world this would be, but none of the creatures seem to care about the other. If anything, they play with them like friends.

Minutes turned into hours, and soon, the party felt a cool breeze on their faces. The woods began to part, and a large body of water appeared through the clearing. In the shade, a single chair was set next to a table with hundreds of fruits and vegetables.

Animals littered the area, some appearing to have liberated some of the food set aside for them, eating and chittering as they did.

This place… somewhere in my memories, I can sense… something familiar.

Before he could ask a question, Max heard Chromie's fingers snapping, and the world faded away.

Links

//[2025-08-05 10:41]

[None]

[F8]62/530(1) Chapter 530 - What's to Come

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488785/chapter-530-whats-to-come; [F8]62/530(1[this.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 12:11,=1.2 2025-08-05 10:11,=1.1 2025-08-04 11:53],[word.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 12:11],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-08-04 11:53],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 12:11],[publish2025-08-03 16:45],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:45])Chapter 530 - What's to Come - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 530 - What's to Come

“What… where are we?” Fowl asked. “What happened to the food?”

With his hand, Chromie motioned to the five gold chairs placed before his big one.

They were back in the gold room, and everything was almost a mockery of what they considered valuable in their world.

“Seriously?” Cordellia asked. “He’s right, why are we here?”

“The time that is permitted for that world was over. Your journey there was done. Any aches, ailments, pains, or scars are gone. Go ahead, check and see.”

Max heard Fowl mutter, and his boots were gone, his hairy feet present for all to see.

“Hey! My toenail is back!”

“And that’s a blessing?” Cordellia asked.

Their warrior responded by lifting a foot and wiggling his toes at her.

“Keep it up, and I’ll bring these closer.”

“Stop that behavior!”

Chromie’s voice carried a force they hadn’t felt in a while and Max even felt it almost push against his mental strength.

Fowl and Cordellia went quiet, and all five sat down and moved to their seats.

“Now then, listen. You have just three more floors to go. You–”

“Wait? Three?!”

Their archer covered her mouth as Chromie pointed a metallic finger at her.

“Do not interrupt. We are now on the 97th floor. The 96th is gone. You five have been made whole. Even now, if you try, you should notice that not only physical injuries have been healed, but the scars which you carried mentally and emotionally have been lessened.”

Max felt his head move back and frowned, trying to think about all the bad things he had experienced.

At the fringes of his memories were the moments he had been betrayed. He could remember the moment he had almost been taken away on the day of his skill selection. Everything that used to anger him was almost stripped away.

“Why would you do this? Why take this from us?!” Max demanded.

“Because it is necessary for what comes next.”

“Necessary?! To strip us of what makes us who we are? To cause us to forget what pain made us who we are? What happened to all the testing of those early tower floors in the sixties? Those were done to see how our actions might have consequences. And now all that is gone!”

Anger grew inside Max, and he felt a rage building up as he stood, pointing a finger at their host.

“Do not take away what isn’t yours to take. I want to complete the tower because I came here for the right reasons, not something you or the system did to change us.”

Chromie stood there, still having not sat down, his metallic face reflecting Max's rage.

“Do you all feel this way?”

“I do,” Tanila said, rising to her feet.

“As do I,” Cordellia stated.

“Me too!”

“And me,” Batrire said.

Chromie nodded once, and his fingers snapped, the sound seeming to shatter whatever walls had held back their memories and emotions.

For a moment, Max felt his head hurt and his chest tighten, the sensation of all that pain and suffering returning, but with it also came joy and happiness.

“Congratulations. You five have passed.”

“Passed?” Batrire gasped. “Passed what?”

“The test. When offered to forget who you were and bear no pain, they will fail what comes next if one accepts it. Do not ask what that would be, as you will face something else. Just know you are now granted the chance to continue the climb. Three floors remain, and we must discuss what is coming.”

Chromie sat down, and everyone retook their seats after a few seconds.

“You will be sent to the 98th floor. There you will be able to trade in the items you acquired. Each of you can only get one of each item offered. Each one is bound to you. You cannot give it to another. That is where the real rewards are. Perhaps you gain just one greater thing or five lesser ones. The choice is yours.

“You can even stay there for as long as you wish. Rooms and food are available at minimal cost using your world's currency. Just know from that floor on, there will be no more treasure. No more items. Nothing else within the tower item-wise that can help you with the last floor shall be granted to you. Do you understand?”

“So… it’s like the bazaar and yet different?” Fowl asked.

“Correct.”

“And what about the 99th floor?” Max asked.

Metallic fingers drummed against the arm of the golden chair Chromie sat in.

“When you leave the 98th floor, you will be sent back to your world. Return to the tower, and you may enter the 99th. Only once can you enter this floor. Those gems you have to escape the tower will no longer work. You will be given one last chance to choose a different life. On the second-to-last floor, you can talk with any god who wishes you to be the start of their bloodline on a new world.”

“Any god?” Tanila asked slowly.

“You will find out when you arrive there how many gods have been intrigued or inspired by your actions. Each of you has been watched. Prepare yourselves for what comes. Just know that once you turn down a god, they cannot be spoken to again.

“They will only speak of what they can offer you. None will speak of what comes on the last floor. If you choose to accept their offer, you will be taken away. The system may modify some of your abilities, or it may not. Much depends upon what the god who woos you is willing to spend to allow you to keep what you have earned.”

Fowl started to open his mouth and Chromie lifted his hand.

“No questions. Let me finish.

“If you choose to continue the climb, you will once more be returned to your world. Anyone you love or wish to speak with, do it before entering the tower for the final time. No matter the outcome, you will not be able to return to this world.”

Their host sat silent for a second, and then his head leaned forward, focused on Max.

“If you complete the tower and are allowed to keep your skill, be careful traveling to worlds that are not yours. Some gods will take that as an attack. They would be within their rights to then engage you in combat. Know that you are weak compared to the gods of the worlds you come from. Do not risk it.”

Max glanced at the others who were all looking at him and gave a sheepish grin.

“This is the last time we will speak like this.”

Chromie stood and gave a slight bow.

“Tower climbers, I wish you success regardless of whatever decision you make in the coming time.”

Before they could say a word, he snapped his fingers and the world shifted again.

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“Mother of all ogre nuts,” Batrire cursed. “Look at this place!”

They all turned around, standing on a raised platform in the middle of a town.

Everywhere were buildings, and beings of all kinds were walking, calling out, and waving at them.

“What… this place… it looks like Peltagow,” Max stated. “Why are all the buildings like this?”

“Welcome, adventurers!”

Everyone turned to see a tree moving toward them. Two eyes and a large mouth present on its upper trunk.

“What the–” Fowl muttered, his hand flexing over and over but nothing happened. “My weapon?! Where’s my weapon?!”

The tree stopped moving, the roots no longer scurrying along the grass near them. Its limbs were waving with big leafy bunches where hands would be.

“I mean you no harm and no harm can be done here! You are safe and I am the one who welcomes you. I am Helk!”

“Helk?” Max repeated.

“Yes?”

Neither said a word, and Max chuckled.

“Sorry, I was making sure I said it right. Uh… forgive us it's a bit strange just appearing here and then a… tree–”

“Treant,” Helk stated.

“A treant welcoming us.”

“Fear not, you are not the first to react as such, and I have had many creatures attempt to bite, claw, climb, or even defecate on me. Thankfully, none of that is allowed.”

“So… uh… this place. We’re supposed to trade and find items here?” Fowl asked.

“Exactly! This is a shopping opportunity like no other for those who have fought their way through the tower! Here you can trade many things for items that might assist you on the coming floors. I expect that each of you has the crystals from the previous bosses?”

Max held out a hand, and soon all five were in it.

“Excellent! Those and other items you acquired in the tower can be traded. Just know that while you might not be told what someone is looking for, you can always ask if they want something specific.”

“Can you be more specific?” Tanila asked.

The treant began to shake, leaves falling to the ground as it smiled.

“A great question! I would love to sample some sap from trees on tower floors. If you have any on you, I could trade some of my sap, which is very useful for making healing potions stronger than any on your world.”

“Sap?”

Helk's body swayed forward and backward.

“Yes! You might not be aware of this, but each sap is unique. I can… Forgive me, I could talk about sap for days, yet you are not here to discuss the fantastic qualities of sap. Not many would want to spend hours discussing how sap can be used for drinks or food, healing potions or–”

The treant clamped its mouth shut and grunted.

“I did it again. Forgive me. Now then you are welcome to peruse any area of town. There is a wall that blocks all from entering or leaving via approved means. In a day a portal will appear that only your party can see. It will return you to your world when you take it. Scattered throughout the town is a variety of places to stop and rest. Food and drinks can be found there.

“The city is broken down into four simple quadrants, but know that there are hundreds of stores in each area. The northeast one deals with armor and clothing. The southeast one deals with weapons, shields and anything one might use for offensive purposes. To the southwest, one will find all sorts of jewelry and other trinkets which might aid you in the coming floors. Lastly, to the northwest are the reagents are traded. There you will find various things you never knew existed but wish you had. Those who love to craft often lose themselves for weeks in that section. You will also find powerful potions and elixirs there. Any questions?”

“Would sap be located there?” Max asked, grinning.

“Ahh a wise one,” Helk replied. “Yes! You could do well trading for it, bringing me the sap, and possibly finding someone willing to create a potion for you.”

“Uh, what about ale? Do you have ale here?”

Pointing a leafy appendage at Fowl, the tree chuckled.

“That we do, my dwarven friend. Ale from hundreds of worlds, all crafted differently and yet each one deemed the best of that world!”

“Dear Ockrim, you do love me!” their warrior proclaimed. “I say we hit one of those places before we get out and try trading for things. One does better on a full stomach and with a few barrels of ale in them!”

Batrire groaned and shook her head.

“He’ll never leave this place,” she muttered.

Max gave a small bow and let out a sigh.

“I can’t believe I’m saying this but we’ll do what Fowl asked first. If we don’t, he’ll whine until we give in. At least afterwards we can get a few moments of peace while we try to find out what’s out here.”

Everyone nodded, especially their dwarven warrior.

“I knew I picked a good brother,” Fowl proclaimed, slapping Max’s back. “Now then, my good tree, where should I go for the best ale in the city?”

“Do you like bugs?”

Their warrior's head snapped back like he had been kicked there.

“Bugs?”

“Oh yes! There is a fine place to the northwest that has a few ales with different flavors of bugs! An experience one will never forget!”

Max couldn’t help but laugh as his dwarven brother’s face turned green momentarily.

“Oh gods, Ockrim… what kind of love is this?”

Links

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[None]

[F8]63/531(1) Chapter 531 - Shopping for the Unknown

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488787/chapter-531-shopping-for-the-unknown; [F8]63/531(1[this.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:12,=1.1del 2025-08-04 11:53], [word.Waybak=1.2 2025-08-05 10:12],[Wayback_first2025-08-04 11:53], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 12:23], [publish2025-08-03 16:45],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:45])Chapter 531 - Shopping for the Unknown - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 531 - Shopping for the Unknown

Their warrior followed behind as the rest of the party split up in pairs. First, they entered shops in the northeast district and took notes on what was available to purchase.

Hours stretched on, and after about ten of them, they returned to the *Tiny Ogre* to compare notes and see what they had learned.

Max was glad that the owner of the place ignored Fowl's laughing each time he came close; the three-foot-tall red ogre was always more than happy to trade food and drink for gold.

"So weapon-wise, I'm certain nothing there is of value to any of us," Max said as he glanced through what Cordellia and Batrire had written down. "Everything you've listed and what I know the two of you have don't even come close."

"Part of me hates how you just flip through a hundred pages so quickly," their ranger stated. "Still, that means we need less time to discuss things."

"What about armor then?" Fowl asked, tearing off a piece of meat from a bone with his teeth afterward.

Max shook his head and frowned.

"So for you, no. The stats are too low, and the few that most likely offer skills like the weapons will be meh at best. Tanila and Batrire are in a similar position. Only Cordellia could use one or two pieces if we could find the right ones."

"Which takes us to rings, necklaces and earrings," Tanila said.

"Tell me again why we didn't start there first?" their ranger asked. "I believe our lovely mage made that recommendation first."

"Because we can rule out an entire section if the armor and weapons are similar. Even better, though, is the list of materials shops specifically seek. What they offer for these crystals is pathetic."

"The real game," their mage muttered.

"What game?" Fowl asked.

“Go back to eating and drinking,” Batrire said. “You either pull your head out of your arse and be helpful or just do what you’re told later.”

“Bah, have you tried this ale?! It tastes like… like… gods, I don’t know, but it tastes amazing!”

Their healer sighe,d and Max shrugged.

“He’s fine. With his limited ability to read and write, he would only slow us down. Tomorrow, we can hit the southwest section and see what they offer. If I’m right, that area and the northwest will be where we spend most of our materials.”

“You’re enjoying this,” Tanila stated as she poked him. “I mean, I knew you liked this from how you spoke with every shop owner we met, but your smile grew as you discussed tomorrow.”

“I never said I didn’t like to shop,” Max replied, trying to appear innocent. “I simply stated my desire not to go shopping for shoes and other items you and those two will spend all day looking at.”

“A dwarf only needs three pairs of shoes,” Fowl stated. “Fighting, drinking, and a backup pair for when someone vomits on your first drinking pair.”

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“This is a fantastic item for anyone who needs to withstand getting smacked around,” the shopkeeper stated.

Max nodded, still trying to understand how a flower talked to him.

So many different beings exist all over the system. You keep forgetting that.

I know… but it’s a sunflower… a freaking sunflower is trying to sell me a ring that Fowl could use.

“And all you want for it is one shard?” Tanila asked, her voice not hiding her dismay.

“Yes. Many will attempt to get two or three for something only worth one. I’m not one of them. No doubt you have encountered your fair share of them already.”

Max and Tanila nodded.

“Word travels fast?”

The plant laughed and a few seeds fell to the ground, quickly replaced by another as it pushed forward. A pink bird cawed, swooping down from one of the rafters in the shop and snatched the seed, returning to its perch before pecking at it.

“There are two other groups in the city right now. Both have been here a while, and some have started making bets on whether they will ever leave. The longer one stays the harder it is to return home. Judging from your questions, you already have learned the game.”

Max shook his head, still trying to figure out this one.

“Tell me, Spouak, why tell us this?”

“I have been here a long time,” the shop owner replied. “My roots run deep and my seeds are starting to fall more regularly. Soon, I shall have another grow in that pot over there to replace me. They will be wild, trying to take advantage of you, gain as much as they can for themselves, and then learn the truth the hard way.”

“Which is?” Tanila asked.

“That sometimes the easiest way to get ahead is to be honest and kind. Those who choose to do so are occasionally taken advantage of, but having stayed the course, all who find my shop while I am still here leave happy. Truthfully, I have sold far more goods in my wiser state than in my younger one. With age comes wisdom. Let your roots grow deep and realize this.”

Max nodded and smiled as Tanila held out a crystal shard.

“You’re right,” she replied. “We’ll take the ring and I’ll see if we can’t find the compost you are looking for. Even though I can’t trade this just yet, our warrior will be here to collect it.”

Spouak bowed slightly, half a dozen seeds falling to the wooden floor.

A squawk came from the pink bird who was still working on the first one.

“No worries, they won’t take all of them.”

“We can take one?” Max asked.

“Please do. There are a few in the city who would like one. Perhaps they will help you find a better item or deal in doing so.”

“Thank you,” he said, bending his neck. “I am glad we stumbled upon this place.”

Spouak extended a long vine and shook Tanila’s hand, a few more seeds falling from the flower as it smiled.

“May you all find what you’re looking for at the top of the tower.”

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Fowl held the ring a moment before slipping it onto his finger. He stared at the twisted vines and the yellow petals that wrapped around it.

“I still say it looks a little… uh… not like what I would normally use,” their warrior said. “Still, it’s hard to complain about something that gives me 150 Constitution.”

“Hard to complain he says,” their healer muttered. “Like those things are growing on trees.”

Max and Tanila both chuckled, and their healer groaned.

“What about a flower?”

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“Sir, I think you’re mistaken. You can’t possibly have one of those.”

Max smiled as the ten-foot-tall bearkin towered over him.

She spoke softly but still carried a sense of power with each word.

“Why do you believe it’s impossible?”

“Artifact pieces are beyond rare. I can count the number of times one has been brought into my shop and I won’t bore you with numbers, but I’m much older than I look.”

Max didn’t reply as Tanila bit her lip.

Both could see the grey streaks and patches that stained the older bear’s fur.

“Let’s just say we had one at our party. What would that get us, Nadetta?”

The shopkeeper grunted and turned, moving to an ordinary box on a shelf behind her.

Her large claws grabbed onto its sides, and she set it down on the wooden counter.

“I would trade one of these for it,” she said as she lifted the lid.

Max tried not to blink, knowing that once he did, he couldn’t stop.

A potion like the one Batrire took!

You need to decide who should get it. Remember, they can’t be traded. It’s a shame you have no more of them to trade.

“Do you have only the one?”

Nadetta began to chuckle, her immense body shaking as she did.

“You are serious?! Do you even know what these offer? To think that–”

The woman’s jaw stopped as Tanila held one of her artifact pieces in her hand.

“You… have one!” she gasped. “Quickly! Let us trade!”

Tanila stored it and Max shook his head.

“No, we’re seeing what is out there. We know these are sought after and must be worth more than just that single elixir. After all, it only gives 250 to each stat.”

Nadetta’s mouth opened and closed, sending saliva in a few directions and splattering upon the counter.

“You say that like it’s nothing! Do you have any idea?! The things required to procure one of these things or create them is… impossible!”

‘Well, we’ll keep looking,” Max said, motioning at the door with his head. “I know what you have and we’ll discuss it with our friends. If they deem it worthwhile, we’ll be back.”

“But! I…”

She stopped, and Max watched as her shoulders rolled forward, both massive paws absorbing the weight as she leaned against the wooden counter.

“I will talk with my sister. Perhaps we can offer more… just a little more.”

“Well, I’ll return with my friends then,” Max replied, giving her a fancy bow. “Until then may your–” His voice caught in his throat as an idea caught in his head. “Nadetta… how would you like to have a solid black coat again?”

She stood upright, her head almost touching the rafter above her.

“Do not tease me like that or I may ban you from my shop and tell everyone what you said.”

Max waved his hands and then had a rainbow crystal appear.

“No teasing. Here, let me show you.”

***

“Holy elf tits,” Fowl muttered. “You seriously let him color a bear's fur?”

Tanila slowly nodded.

“For a moment, I thought that woman might ask Max to marry him after she saw herself in a mirror. To think that she was so moved by such an act and not requiring payment, that we all know you will go there and trade an artifact piece with her.”

“Two stat potions,” their warrior muttered. “Seems a bit cheap.”

A grunt came from him as Batrire kicked his shins under the table.

“Stop that woman! I’m just playing!”

“No one’s laughing,” their healer replied. “Still, Max is right. The real value is in those two areas. We could procure various items that would make everything better for us.”

“Imagine,” Fowl said slowly. “I could have more intelligence than any other dwarven warrior in history.”

“Bah, you’d still do stupid stuff,” Cordellia replied.

“Well duh, I’m a man, it’s in my blood.”

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“It’s been almost three weeks,” Max said as he pushed everyone toward the portal. “We’ve traded everything and it’s time to go.”

“But… the ale!” Fowl replied.

“I’ve got kegs of it!”

“What about the–”

“No!” Max exclaimed, cutting off Cordellia.

“He’s right,” Tanila stated. “We were warned that the longer we stay, the harder it will be to leave. Besides, we’ve fleeced every shopkeeper of any item worth having.”

“She’s right… I can feel it calling back to me to return to the inn,” Batrire said. “Like… that forest we were in. Somehow, it lulls you into wanting to stay here.”

“But the ale! It’s so good!”

Max grunted and continued to push his friend toward the glowing portal near the center of town.

“Ahh, leaving?” Helk called out, moving toward them from the corner of the grassy area.

“We are!” Tanila replied, almost tugging Cordellia’s arm to keep her moving.

“Impressive… Most never trade as well as I have heard you did. Even fewer leave.”

“The shopkeepers,” Max said as he stared at the treant. “They used to be climbers, didn’t they?”

Leaves fell to the ground as Helk’s whole body shook, his deep laughter washing over them.

“You’re smart, Max. Very smart. Perhaps you five will just do what most never do.”

Grunting, he nodded and kept pushing his dwarven friend until Fowl reached the portal and vanished. Tanila, Cordellia and Batrire all followed suit, leaving him alone for a second with the treant.

“I hope you enjoyed that, sap,” Max said as he waved.

“Oh, I did. Good luck on the next floor and may the gods have mercy on you,” Helk replied as he touched the portal.

Links

//[2025-08-05 12:23]

[None]

[F8]64/532(1) Chapter 532 - Drinking Time

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488790/chapter-532-drinking-time;
[F8]64/532(1[this.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 12:36,=1.1 2025-08-05 10:11],
[word.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 12:36],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-08-05 10:11],
[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 11:53],[this.word2025-08-05 12:37],
[publish2025-08-03 16:46],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:46])Chapter 532 - Drinking Time - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 532 - Drinking Time

Max smiled at his friends as they each looked at the items in their hands.

They had waited until they returned home to use the potions and elixirs each had acquired on the 98th floor.

Fowl sat there holding four potions, one elixir, and the only ring that he had found worthy of him.

Their ranger's eyes were as wide as the moon. Both brown eyes were locked on the elixir and the two potions. She had procured three items that rounded out her areas of weakness.

Both Tanila and Batrire had five potions and an elixir.

“You look excited,” their mage stated as she winked at him. “Sure, it’s only three potions, but you rarely get anything for yourself.”

He nodded and motioned to Fowl.

“You’re up. We all promised to let you be the test… er, I mean, go first.”

“Bah, you’re lucky you didn’t lie about that ale,” his friend replied. “I’m still upset they wouldn’t sell you any more.”

“Quit your yappin' and start drinking!” Batrire exclaimed. I wanna see how big my man ends up!”

Fowl winked at Batrire and undid a seal on a potion first.

The green liquid vanished as he sucked it dry in a moment, smacking his lips, his face scrunched up as he did.

“Wow, that kicks,” Fowl muttered as he undid the next one. Soon, all four potions were empty, and the only item remaining was the elixir, which was the golden liquid.

“Still can’t believe I’m about to get taller,” their warrior said quietly. “Every dwarf's dream.”

“Bah, I better grow again,” Batrire said. “I like having to be climbed.”

Cordellia made a gagging sound, and Max felt a little queasy as well.

“And let’s not make the pregnant woman feel worse,” Tanila announced. “Drink your elixir so the rest of us can get on with it.”

Fowl snorted and quickly drained the golden liquid like a champ.

His body convulsed as Batrire’s had, immediately giving off the same energy and heat that Max expected would come.

Soon their warrior began to grow, and when Fowl gasped for air, Max could already sense that he was a different dwarf.

“Stand.”

Fowl blinked, looking up at him as he held out his hand.

“What?”

“I said stand,” Max repeated. “Let’s see how tall you are.”

Their warrior grabbed his hand and stood, smiling from ear to ear as he rose. Then his smile faltered as he looked up at Max.

“Wait… I should be–”

Fowl finally noticed the chuckles and looked at everyone who was covering their mouths.

“Why am I not taller? I should be–”

Max lowered himself, no longer on his tiptoes, and his warrior friend scowled.

“You’re an ogre humpin' bastard!”

Max laughed, dodging his friend's swings, running around the room as Fowl chased him.

“Gods that was funny,” Cordellia said as she wiped away a few tears.

Fowl froze on the second lap around the room, and Max spun when he did. He watched his friend's face go slack before dropping to his knees, both hands held up into the air.

“Ockrim… thank you,” he whispered.

“What’s wrong? What is it?” Batrire asked, moving from the couch toward him.

Tears ran like streams down the weathered dwarf’s face, yet he smiled as if nothing at all was wrong.

“My stats… they’re… beautiful.”

Everyone went silent as Fowl rose, grabbed Batrire in his arms, and spun her around, laughing.

“I have a 642 in my strength, a 505 in my dexterity, and my constitution is a 909!” he shouted. “Even better is the 350 in my intelligence and a 372 in my wisdom! I’m… I’m able to acquire the second stage of stat progression!”

Max felt his heart quicken and could sense Bob’s reaction.

What is it?

There has been so much growth. What is it about the tower and these last few levels? We gained nothing, but they gained everything. Do not get me wrong; they needed it more than we did, but that kind of growth is exactly what he needed.

Now I’m curious about what I’m missing out on. It was bad enough that I was always stuck in your storage space. Perhaps you should have thought of me while you all went shopping.

Max groaned, and everyone looked at him.

“Sorry, Rakonath was complaining about not getting any love from Ockrim or other gods.”

Fowl wiped away his cheeks and stood there, beaming with joy.

“I… this day, I never thought it would come,” their warrior said slowly. “I always hoped, always dreamed, but to see these stats and reach three second-tier milestones… thank you. Thank you to all of you.”

Max sensed the change in the room as all the anxiety and concern that had been hidden behind walls and masks were stripped away. Both elves stood and moved to where the dwarves were, wrapping their arms around them.

“Get over here, baldie,” Cordellia teased.

Laughing, Max joined the group, enjoying a moment of absolute bliss.

“I hate to ruin this moment,” Max said as he spoke into the group, “but you might want to not sleep in your own bed tonight. Find somewhere you don’t have to clean up after.”

“What does that mean?” Fowl asked.

“It’s just a tradition I learned for those who hit the second-tier milestone. Thought I’d pass it on. Something I learned on Igarra’s world.”

Fowl blew a raspberry and shook his head.

“No thanks! Tonight my love and I are going to celebrate!

***

“You realize that everything is going to change, and yet you seem oblivious to it,” Tanila said. “What are you going to do?”

Max held her a little tighter as they lay in bed, both of them still trying to process everything that had taken place in that room.

“Say goodbye, craft everything I can. Make the most of our time before we take that last step. No one said we had to rush to enter the next floor. I’m not sure about you but I need probably a month to do everything I believe I can do.”

Tanila shook her head and sighed.

“You are going to be a pain in my arse, aren’t you? Running off to the crafting room.”

Turning his head, Max stared into her gold eyes, watching as she winked at him.

“We both know that I have to try. Why else would that potion pick that one skill out of all the skills to raise?”

Tanila took a deep breath and let it out.

“A legendary armor and weapon crafter. Just another title to add to the growing list of things you already possess,” she teased. “What songs will they sing about next? Your muffin baking skills?”

Kissing her, he closed his eyes and tried to block out the hundreds of ideas flowing through his mind.

You do realize that you will be working nonstop to make this happen. She is right; you will be busy in the coming days.

But what can I do? We need to get these things done and see the potential power of the armor I can make! You know we’re running out of time. Tanila will give birth most likely in two months. What would happen to our child if we couldn’t take them with us into the tower? Store them in my dimensional space? What if that skill is taken from me? How would I live knowing that my foolishness cost us our child?

Yet you are willing to spend time on things that don’t matter. The tower is all that matters.

No my family matters!

So stay here, do not enter it and hope you can live out all your days in peace. Perhaps you will not feel the urge you already fight against that calls you to travel to the next floor. I hope your friends understand and can resist the same temptation.

Even more so, pray that no other gods come… or worse, that the other black skills do not come. They will not wait. They will defeat the tower and grow stronger. Even if it takes them a hundred years, they will come and you will be unable to stop them, unable to protect your loved ones. Then how guilty will you feel as you watch their lives snuffed out?

I say this as your friend. Even though I was filled with a hunger and desire for blood and destruction, what I spoke about almost two years ago is still true. Having those you love is a weakness. Everyone who desires your

destruction will use them against you. I can sense that you know this and realize your time is running out.

Will I ever be strong enough to stop this cycle?

Bob was silent for a few seconds.

Perhaps in time. The next step to accomplishing that comes in the tower. Do not think there is any other way beyond that.

Max could feel Tanila's grip on his arm and quickly breathed.

"What's wrong? You are shaking."

"I… Bob's telling me I might be a fool. No matter what, we must enter the tower before time runs out."

"Runs out? What are you worried about? Our child? Surely–"

"The other skills," Max stated, cutting her off. "They aren't taking time off. Wherever they are, they are blazing a trail of destruction and will no doubt be looking for me. If I stay here too long, all of you are at risk."

"We can fight them together," Tanila said, touching his chest. "You're not alone."

"I know," he whispered. "I know. Now then, if you don't mind, I'm going to let you get some sleep. When you wake up, the tub's over there."

Tanila groaned, lifting her head to look at the copper tub.

"You're serious? It's that bad?"

Max laughed and nodded.

"Trust me when I say we're getting our money's worth from this tavern. They're not going to like what they find in the morning.

***

Tom frowned as he read the last sheet of paper from the stack Max had given him.

"You're serious?"

"I am. I need it done now."

Huffing, their trainer shook his head.

"Never a dull moment. You realize I'm not supposed to be involved in this stuff?"

"I do," Max replied, patting the older man's shoulder. "But, I'd like to think that Everett will understand and let it go this time. Besides, you're the only one I can trust with this. No one else."

"At least take me to dinner or something before buttering me up like that," Tom muttered. "I'll get it done. And the other stuff you requested will be sent to the crafting room. Give me a day, two tops. Will that be enough time?"

Max nodded, snorting, preparing to move to the next spot on his list of things to do.

“Two days is fine if that is what it takes. Just know I will be busy until the day we enter the next floor.”

“And when is that?” Tom asked. “I mean… word has spread even though we have tried to keep it a secret. The entire town is like a pot about to bubble over. Parties and celebrations along with more betting than you can believe is taking place. Everyone wants to know when you and the rest of your party will attempt the impossible.

“In the last two months, I have heard that every Choosing day, the number of humans who are given adventuring skills has increased by almost ten times. Many aren’t nobles who are getting two skills. The rumor is that Phaius himself has blessed this moment. If things don’t change, we'll be in trouble in a generation or two as there might not be enough crafters or other classes to deal with the sudden loss.”

Rubbing his bald head, Max wanted to groan but didn’t.

Did you cause this?

Why are you blaming me?

Because you did something to my sister. Is it possible that whatever you did has made all this happen?

Tom told you why this is happening. The people are correct. Only the gods could cause this kind of change in their world. I had to give up my own power and risk our health to do what we did for your sister. We broke the rules… or bent them I guess you might say. No, what is taking place right now is the logical step for gods who have five of you preparing to take the next step.

Unable to help it, Max groaned and Tom laughed.

“We will miss you and your ability to craft, but don’t worry, that boy you told us about, Joshua. He is progressing quickly, and soon, his Choosing day will come. When it happens, he has already informed us that he will join our Faction.”

“Did someone tell him I gave you his name?”

“No. He’s not the only one. Every crafter wants a place here. Our facilities, the items we have because of you… There is no better place in all the world now than the very ground you are standing on.”

Scratching his head, Max shrugged.

“I guess I’ll owe you all another apology for making life difficult.”

Laughing, Tom slapped him on the arm.

“I don’t get a lot of sleep at the moment, but I wouldn’t trade it for the world.”

***

“What’s wrong?” Max asked, teasing his dwarven friend.

“I don’t wana talk about it,” Fowl groaned. “Batrire… she blames me.”

Laughing, he slid a mug of ale across the table.

“I tried to warn you… you didn’t listen.”

“Yeah… yeah you did,” Fowl muttered. “Should I ask what the next one’s like? Tell me it gets better.”

Max shook his head and frowned.

“I’m still waiting.”

“Still waiting?”

He saw the confused expression on his friend's face and nodded, leaning closer.

“I think one has to have a complete bloodline before that can happen.”

Fowl grunted and then sighed, picking up the mug and draining it dry.

“Well, I don’t gota worry about that then. Ain’t no way I’m getting a bloodline anytime soon.”

Sighing, Max nodded.

That makes two of us…

Links

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[None]

[F8]65/533(1) Chapter 533 - A Kingly Request

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488791/chapter-533-a-kingly-request;
[F8]65/533(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-08-05 10:11],[word.Waybak=1 2025-08-05 10:11],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:11],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:12],[this.word2025-08-05 12:52],[publish2025-08-03 16:46],
[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:46])Chapter 533 - A Kingly Request - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 533 - A Kingly Request

Dagon’s frown gave way to a smile as he grabbed Fowl’s hand.

“You, my boy, are everything I pray our people will become.”

Max could see the smile on his friend's face grow larger as the King of the dwarves patted Fowl’s arm.

“You have grown strong, and the fact that you defeated me by yourself tells me you will do fine in the tower.”

“Thank you for honoring my request and everything you have done for us,” Fowl replied.

Kneeling before Dagon, their warrior touched the back of his hand to his forehead.

“I promise that whatever happens, I shall bring honor to our people and Ockrim.”

“Then stand and stop that foolishness,” Dagon replied. “It’s bad enough I got my arse kicked by two different people this morning. Having one of the two who did it kneeling doesn’t feel right.”

Laughing, Fowl stood and turned as Batrire ran to him, jumping into his arms.

“Oh, just wait until we get home. I’m going to reward you well for that win.”

Laughing, the King motioned to the two guards who were still standing with their mouths slightly open.

“Stop catching flies and go have my chef prepare us something to eat! There is much to celebrate, and I don’t want to miss out on any of the stories I can be told!”

***

Max and Fowl sat with Dagon in plush chairs, sipping a small drink near a fire.

The three women were with Velda, exploring a part of the castle that most dwarves never got to see.

A few minutes of silence had been sat through as the King considered the few things Max had been able to share with him.

“Your request is valid and I will honor it,” Dagon said. “I only ask for one thing in return.”

“And what is that?”

“When the time comes for you to do the 99th floor, do it here.”

Max glanced at Fowl, whose head swiveled between him and the King.

“All you want is for us to enter the tower here? Why is that?”

Sighing, Dagon stood up straight and spun the glass cup, which held only an inch of amber liquid.

“Part of it is for the people. To see two of their own do such a thing will inspire them as it has your people. Already, some dwarves are leaving in small packs for your kingdom. Many believe that the tower over there must have aided in your success. Many will not listen to logic or reason when we tell them that it doesn’t matter which tower they enter. But you know dwarves…”

He waited to see if the King would finish that thought, but Dagon never did.

“I don’t think that should be a problem,” Max replied. “Fowl?”

“Oh gods no! Batrire and I would be honored to do that request. I’m still in shock, that he’s giving you two bars so easily.”

“It’s not easy,” Dagon replied. “But I know that you all need to defeat the tower no matter what and I'm sitting on them, waiting for the perfect moment to have them forged has come. I know in my heart that there is no other need as great as yours.

“Besides, I’m in debt as it is. The number of dragon scales you have given me has changed the trajectory of our crafting hall. Our smiths are scouring old books, trying to find ways to use them best.”

Dagon leaned forward and winked at both of them.

“Still I am grateful that you are allowing us to keep the armor we had made for you. The irony that you no longer need it or that it wouldn’t fit as Fowl has sprouted up like a weed means some dwarves are anxiously trying to prove their worth. I may host a tournament in the coming year to give a prize to the winner. Perhaps I can find ways to draw back my people to this city and start a new era of adventuring.”

“I’d come here for a tournament where the prize was dragon armor,” Fowl stated. “I mean, not now of course as one it wouldn’t be fair after I kicked your arse… my King.”

Dagon roared with laughter and then finished off his drink in one go.

He sighed and smiled, setting the cup on a small table beside his chair.

“I’m going to miss this. The problem with being me is that I do not have the luxury of speaking freely with many as I am right now. Too often, most are caught up in not angering me or worrying that I might get upset and never sit with them again. I can tell neither of you cares about that.”

“Nope, all we desire is to plunder your vaults,” Max replied.

Max felt a tug in his mind as the three of them sat there, laughing and enjoying a quiet moment.

You need to hurry up and return. Aerthen has come, and she wants to speak with you.

Have you received any answer to the question I asked you?

No. Right now, her mind is like a wall to me. I cannot read it as I could before. Whatever has happened… something is wrong.

Playing the role of a content man, Max sat in his chair, wondering what would happen upon his return to Peltagow.

***

“Max Hoste… you are in trouble.”

Aerthen’s humanoid form vibrated as she towered over him, seemingly unconcerned with Rakonath, who stood beside him, her eyes radiating with power.

“It was not my fault.”

She shook her head at his response and huffed.

“That does not matter! You do not realize what you have done!”

“I do realize it, which is why I had Rakonath come and find you,” Max replied. I needed to know what your Father thought. I tried—I really tried—not to fight Bekat, but he wouldn’t back down.”

Man and dragon stood there, neither ready to move back, when a hand pressed against their chests.

“You two need to stop now,” Rakonath said quietly. “Take a moment and breathe. Aerthen you know Max, he doesn’t do what you said he did.”

The red dragon’s head snapped toward the younger one, and her eyes glowed.

“You, eggling, do not understand what is being said across the dreamworld! You cannot yet see or hear the chaos that has ensued because of what he has done!”

Max started to speak when he sensed his dragon’s fingers push him back a little more.

“No, Aerthen, you do not understand that none of it matters. Those who say he is a threat will find Max upon my back and must face the two of us. None will find an easy meal.”

Rakonath growled, and his chest vibrated as he snorted. There was almost a hint of smoke visible from his nostrils.

“You already stated that our Father has not revealed any dreams. Some believe it means one thing and others believe it means something else. You do not get to speak for him any more than I get to speak for him. Just know, I am not the eggling you once watched over. If you attempt anything, I will not hesitate to defend him.”

The tension between the two dragons was so thick that Max was certain he could have cut it with his weapon.

Both snorted and pressed up against each other and Rakonath didn’t seem to care or notice that he was still over a foot shorter than the other.

Glancing around them and glad to see no one was watching this spectacle play out in the corner of the Faction grounds, Max put a hand on his friend's shoulder.

“Let it go. None of this will matter in a month.”

“You’re a fool if you believe that!” Aerthen shouted. “If you defeat the tower there are already those who have sent out the dreams of them coming to find you and crush you as a response to what you did!”

Sighing, Max shrugged.

“Let them. I believe my record is still me winning every time against every dragon. Either your Father will end this madness or he wills it. The real question you have to ask is if this was all part of his plan, why is he allowing me to slaughter his children so recklessly?”

Aerthen opened her mouth to reply and then clamped it shut.

The fire in her eyes dimmed slightly as she glared at him.

“What you are accusing the Father of is ludicrous. He would never…”

She stopped talking and stepped back, Rakonath moving forward to take the place she had given up.

“Let her go,” Max told his friend. “She sees it now. You and I already discussed this and we both know there was a reason Bekat was my foe. Out of all the creatures the tower could throw at me, he was the first and only one I gained anything from.”

Rakonath grunted and retreated backward, never taking his eyes off the older dragon.

“I consider you a friend, but this wound that has been made cuts deep in our kind,” Aerthen stated. “For the sake of our friendship, I shall take my leave and not push this issue any further. For now, I would not seek you out. If word comes from the Father that you are to blame, then I will–”

“Do nothing. If you think for a moment I won’t hesitate to end your life if you threaten mine or any of my friends, I will end yours,” Max said. “Do not make a threat or promise you cannot carry out.”

She huffed and turned, not responding. After a dozen yards, her body began to transform, and soon, Aerthen was airborne, her red wings sending gusts of wind at them as she flew upward into the evening sky.

“That didn’t go well,” Rakonath said. “I had thought she would see reason.”

“Rage and hurt often blind reason. Trust me, I have done things or acted out when I shouldn’t have because of that rage. It took a good friend to pull me back and see what I didn’t want to see,” Max replied. “She doesn’t want to see the truth.”

“That we’re pieces in a game, even for our father?”

Placing a hand on Rakonath’s shoulder, he squeezed.

“Come. I don’t have a lot of time but I can’t think of a better way to learn this lesson.”

***

Large tears rolled down Rakonath’s cheeks as he moved a piece on the board.

Max sighed quietly as he watched his friend do what had to be done to win.

“For someone so large and muscular, you sure cry a lot,” Fowl complained. “I mean, so what if you lose, it’s not the end of the world.”

Pieces slid across the board as the two played the game. Fowl was grinning, his offensive pieces pushing deeper and deeper into the squares on the board, drawing closer and closer to the keep that Rakonath occasionally moved.

He smiled slightly, having already taught his dragon how the game worked and shown him dozens of times he sacrificed smaller pieces to win. It had frustrated and angered Rakonath each time, yet the dragon couldn’t seem to do the same, not wanting to admit the lesson he was being taught.

The pain of knowing you're nothing but a pawn or other small piece hurts.

What kind of Father does this?! How can he just–

Stop thinking he is like me. I don’t use lives like this, and I pray I never do. For now, move as I taught you. There is no other way you’ll win. You know this is true.

Rakonath sighed as he shifted another piece, watching Fowl giggle as he used one of his attackers to claim the square and remove it from the board.

Eight turns later, all smiles and laughter were gone as their warrior sat there, looking at the piece that had cut across the board, taking out the few defenders in its way and toppled his keep.

“How did I not see this?” Fowl muttered. “I mean… I’m smarter now…”

Max laughed and sighed, gently patting his dragon’s back as those silver eyes trembled.

“I sacrificed almost everything to get the desired outcome,” Rakonath said quietly. “That’s why you never saw it coming.”

Links

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[None]

[F8]66/534(1) Chapter 534 - An Old Friend

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488793/chapter-534-an-old-friend;
[F8]66/534(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:03,=1 2025-08-05 10:12], [word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:03],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:12], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:12],[this.word2025-08-05 13:10], [publish2025-08-03 16:47],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:47])Chapter 534 - An Old Friend - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 534 - An Old Friend

“Max!”

Glancing up from the piece of armor he was working on, Max blinked, seeing Tom there, both lips drawn tight and his eyebrows scrunched together.

“Now?”

The trainer nodded once and opened the door.

“I’ll be outside the door.”

Max glanced at the pieces he had carefully set on the stone table, stored the tools in his hands and stretched.

“Do I want to know?” Tanila asked, one eyebrow raised as she closed her book.

“You know already. Only one thing would cause Tom to come in and leave like that.”

Storing her book, she rose from the padded chair she had sat in, pushing away the small stool on which her feet had been propped up.

“Well then, I suggest you get that stuff put away quickly. You better hope you’re right about this.”

Max nodded, picking up the pieces on the table and quickly storing them.

“I hope I am,” he whispered.

***

The man who stood before him shifted under his gaze.

At first, he wasn’t sure how Caleb would react upon seeing him. Not much had changed since they met in Rumstant. His head was shaven, and the clothes he wore were much finer, but beyond the extra muscle and inches, surely his friend could tell it was him.

“Caleb, you look well.”

That fool… did he really shave his head like you…

His childhood friend stood there, dressed in clothes he knew Tom had given him. They were a good fit and his friend shook his bald head, still blinking and unable to speak.

“It’s you… You’re really… that voice. I’ll never forget your voice.”

“Take a seat, Caleb. We need to talk,” Max said, motioning to the cushioned chair his friend had been sitting in.

He watched his friend reach backwards, feeling the arm before plopping down.

Summoning a normal wooden chair, Max spun it around and leaned against the back, arms resting on top of it.

“Tell me, how goes the adventuring?”

“Uh… good? I mean, fine. I found a party and we’re almost ready to move to the next dungeons. Soon I’ll be level twenty-three and…”

Caleb stopped talking, shaking his head as he leaned forward.

“You’re really about to defeat the tower… I heard the rumors… tried to ignore them. You were nothing. You just wanted to be a baker and now… you’re the hero of the kingdom. I… I even got a haircut like you because… well, everyone else was doing it.”

Clearing his throat, Max held up a hand.

“I’m glad you’re doing well and have a group,” Max said. “I don’t have a lot of time and wanted to ask you a few questions before I decide what to do with you.”

“Do with me?”

It took effort not to chuckle as his friend’s voice squeaked.

“My sister. Did you ever love her?”

An assortment of facial expressions played out over a few seconds on Caleb’s face and had someone not known the question that had been just asked and by whom it had come from, they might have thought the poor boy was having a seizure.

“Stacy?”

“She’s the only sister I have.”

“I… I liked her… I mean you knew that. Why?”

Standing up, Max lifted his chair and drew closer, just a few feet from the one who had broken him out of a cart and saved his life.

“I’m going to ask a question and don’t lie. I can tell when people are lying and while I owe you for saving my life, trust me when I say that won’t help you here.”

Caleb’s heart beat like a hummingbird's wing and his friend nodded, sweat beginning to form on his bald head.

“Did you know my sister was pregnant?”

“What?!” Caleb exclaimed, his head moving back and eyes widening. “What are you talking about?”

There was no doubt his friend was confused at that question.

“She sent you letters, you replied.”

“What letters?! I never got letters! After Thomas vanished, things went crazy, and well, Trina told me that returning home for a while was a bad idea—a *really* bad idea. So we went south to a few of the other towns and began grinding out in those dungeons. It was slower, and the group did not want to risk anything. About three or four months ago I returned to Peltagow and found a new group. It took time but… I’m sorry, Stacy is pregnant? What does that have to do with me? I haven’t seen her in so long that it couldn’t be–”

Caleb’s eyes widened and Max saw that his friend had finally realized what was happening.

“Wait!” he exclaimed, rising from his chair before Max’s outstretched hand stopped him. “She was pregnant? She had a child? My child?!”

“Sit,” Max said slowly. “We need to talk and you’re going to not like how this conversation goes. If you pass, you’ll get a chance to see your daughter. If you don’t…”

He shook his head and pointed a finger at Caleb as he started to try and talk.

“If you don’t, I’ll make certain you never see her or try to.”

“Or what?”

The look of defiance on his friend's face almost made Max laugh. He had seen Caleb’s eyebrows furrowing and his mouth grow small when upset all his life.

“Or I’ll have someone kill you.”

The tan color on his friend's face vanished and Caleb went limp in the chair.

Well done, Max. Well done.

Laughter echoed in his head as Max sighed.

Summoning a waterskin and cloth, he moved to wake up his friend.

***

Stacy grunted, both arms crossed as she stared at him.

“You should have given me more time! I told you the last time you asked I wasn’t sure.”

“I know,” Max replied as he tried to touch his sister's knee again, only to get his hand slapped away again. “But as I told you, Mom and Dad, I’ll be gone in a few more weeks. Time is running out and I wanted to ensure that you were protected if he came.”

She scoffed and shook her head, glancing at Tanila, who was sitting in her chair, sipping on some warm tea and not saying a word.

“Do you hear him? Like I’m some damsel in distress and need him to protect me?”

Max could sense the slightest change in Tanila as she looked at his sister, watching Stacy shift on the couch.

“Do you want me to answer as a third party or remain silent?”

Clearing her throat, Stacy growled.

“Why do I think you’re going to side with him?” she asked, pointing at Max accusingly.

“I’m not siding with anyone. I came simply to ensure that he didn’t act like a fool. At no point was I planning on having to give wisdom to his sister as a woman should be smart enough to know that when our emotions get involved, logic often goes out the window.”

“But he–”

“Loves you and your daughter very much,” Tanila said, an aura of power radiating off her.

Gods, I love when she does that.

It’s not fair, I can’t be there to witness any of this… I mean Bob gets to…

Really? A dragon complains about not being trapped inside someone when they can soar across the lands.

Quiet!

“You think Max is worried about you being able to kick this boys arse? No, he’s worried that you’ll do something foolish and make a decision you’ll regret because you don’t know all the facts. He went and ensured that Caleb had no idea you were pregnant. He told him more than I would have, but he wanted his old friend to understand his position.

“The woman who captured your brother, had him locked up, and then lured Caleb away, most likely kept those letters from him. I do not doubt that she did everything possible to keep you two separated for sick pleasure or some hopes of finding Max. So, when you’re allowed to consider letting the father of your child have a chance to meet his daughter at least, don’t act like a woman scorned. Instead, act like the adventurer you claim to be, who makes good decisions during battle when lives are on the line.”

Stacy sat there quietly as the aura around Tanila began to fade, and she took a small drink from her tea again.

Max wanted to reach out again but waited. He knew she had to come to this place on her own and not because he forced her.

“You really believe he didn’t ignore me?”

Sighing, Max rubbed his eyes.

“I’m good at what I can do. I can tell when most people are lying. He wasn’t. There were things not related to you that he didn’t tell the whole truth, but I believe Caleb had no clue you were pregnant. That is the only reason why I’m here today, telling you to consider letting him at least meet her. It would be better for her if she knew she had a father and perhaps one day could know him.

“If Callie ever found out that you kept her from him, even knowing he didn’t know and had the chance, it would destroy her trust in you. No one wants that.”

“Fine, but I don’t want you there when he’s here,” Stacy said. “Send Tom in. I’m unsure I could handle it right now if you were there.”

“Why?”

Stacy chewed on her lip a few times, glancing down at her lap.

“All my life I wanted to hang out with you two. Growing up I watched you two play and do everything together. I knew he liked me and when I could flirt, I did. What we did… I said yes and played the willing role. But with both of you in the room together… I’d feel… like a lesser person.”

“But you’re not,” Max stated.

“It doesn’t matter. Some wounds run deep and it will take me some time to get past that one. Even now I’m struggling with things I thought I was over because all these wounds have been reopened. I’ll be fine. Trust me. Even without Tom’s help, I can kick his arse.”

Tanila snorted and Max turned, seeing her turn a little red.

“Sorry, that was just a funny thought.”

Nodding, Max smiled and reached for his sister’s knee once more. This time, she didn’t slap it away, and he squeezed it, laughing when she squirmed.

“I only did what I did because I love you and Callie,” Max said. “And if he hurts you or her, I already told Caleb I’d have someone kill him.”

Stacy burst out in laughter and shook her head.

“You’re a goof, but I’ll claim you as my brother every day of the week.”

Standing, Max shrugged and held his hand out toward Tanila.

“Well then, I’ll let Tom know, and you just tell him when you’re ready. Until then, don’t worry about Caleb. I’ve got someone special taking care of him.”

“Who?” his sister asked.

“Rakonath.”

Both women burst out in laughter, and Max couldn’t help but chuckle.

“Oh yeah, and one last thing, sis…” He grunted, not caring about the face he was making.

“What? Just spit it out already.”

“His haircut. I’m a big fan.”

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

Remember --- The rest of book 9 HITS RR today 8/3!

Book 10 Will start later this month (I dropped the first chapter on my Patreon[L1] but it won't officially start till 8/11 on Patreon) Book 10 will probably hit RR about 2 weeks or so after that (Moving to a 5 chapter week).

Thank you again for the love and support! You can find book 9 on Amazon here[L2]!

Also if you like the audio - Book 7 Just dropped[L3] and Book 8 hits in September!!

Links

//[2025-08-05 13:10]

[L1] https://www.patreon.com/c/AuthorShawnWilson

[L2] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0FC3LXWGR?maas=&ref=

[L3] https://www.royalroad.com/amazon/B0FHR3WMB8

[F8]67/535(1) Chapter 535 - A Dwarven Celebration

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488794/chapter-535-a-dwarven-celebration;
[F8]67/535(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:04,=1 2025-08-05 10:12],

[word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:04,],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:12],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:12],[this.word2025-08-05 13:39],[publish2025-08-03 16:48],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:48])Chapter 535 - A Dwarven Celebration - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 535 - A Dwarven Celebration

“Max, it’s time.”

“I know… just give me one more moment.”

“What’s he doing?” Fowl asked.

His sonar told him that Tanila was shaking her head, pointing at all the chests in the vault they were standing in.

“He’s taking inventory one last time. Dagon promised him he could *borrow* a few more items, and Max knows he won’t have time to keep going back and forth between the kingdoms collecting reagents. You are in for a treat, is all I can say.”

Fowl frowned, and Max could sense Tanila smiling.

“Just let it go, dear. We both know he’s good about taking care of you,” Batrire said.

“That sounded so wrong,” Cordellia complained.

“Bah, don’t make me talk about Rakonath or I’ll–”

A book followed by another flew through the air as their ranger began pelting their warrior with stuff she summoned from her storage space.

“You two, stop that!” Max shouted. “I’m done, we can go.”

“But, he–”

“No,” Max said as he wagged a finger at them. “We’re about to do something so significant you each need to be on your best behavior.”

Fowl snorted and smiled.

“Yes, Father.”

Cordellia started to chuckle until she saw the glare she got from him.

“I got it, I’ll behave.”

He turned to see Tanila smiling at him, a proud look on her face.

“What?”

“Who knew we’d have a dwarf and elf child long before this one?” she replied, rubbing her belly.

“Gods, I hope they’re better behaved than those two,” Max groaned.

***

“My jaw is sore,” Cordellia complained, pointing a finger at Fowl before he could speak. “From smiling!”

“Sure… anyways, we’re almost done,” their warrior said as he held out a hand, helping Batrire down from the open top carriage.

“Max, how many were there?”

“An exact count or roughly?”

“Roughly is good,” Tanila replied.

Doing some math, he smiled and held up eight fingers.

“About eight thousand, give or take four hundred and seventy-two.”

“Give or take?”

“Those are the ones I can remember seeing,” Max informed his friend. “Now then, the King is up there. Shall we go?”

The five moved through the gate's opening and toward the tower. Guards lined the inside, each of them the honor guard that protected Dagon and Velda.

Both of the dwarven royalty had on their armor, each decked out as if going to battle.

“Am I missing something?” Cordellia whispered.

“No, it’s just how they are out in public,” Batrire replied.

Trumpets began to play, and the deep sound of drums reverberated around the inner walls of the tower grounds.

The drums matched each step, and Max ignored his desire to walk faster, wanting to see if they would match his faster cadence.

Ten yards from the King and Queen, the drums stopped.

Max could sense the dwarves who were allowed to be present for this moment. Faction members, family and friends all stood behind the guards, a small buzz of whispers as they watched this moment.

“Friends!” Dagon bellowed. “Today we celebrate this party by doing something none of us may ever see again in our lifetime!”

Cheers and applause echoed off the walls, and after about ten seconds, the King raised his hand and silenced them.

“A gift,” Velda said, holding out a gold chest. “Batrire Hammerfall, wife of Fowl Hammerfall, come and take this token of our support for you and your group as you carry Ockrim’s blessing.”

Their healer sniffed once and then moved forward, bowing low before taking the box and bowing again.

“We are honored to be Ockrim’s children and to carry his blessing. We are grateful for the gift you have given us.”

Velda stepped forward, took Batrire’s head between her hands, and kissed her forehead.

“Go, child. Return to us so that we may see a glimpse of your power.”

Both women returned to where they had started and Max could sense the electricity in the air.

“Fowl, Batrire, Tanila, Cordellia and Max. Please step forward.”

All five of them obeyed the dwarf's request and went off to their right.

“Kneel to receive the blessing of Ockrim!”

Silence was their answer. The five of them knelt, heads held high, as Dagon smiled at them all.

The King stepped forward, and a plain golden cup appeared in his hand. In the other hand was a clear liquid in a bottle from which Max could feel power.

“Our god has given us a gift, and these five will share in something only a few dwarves in our history have ever tasted. Even I have not sampled it!”

A murmur rose for a moment, but the gaze of the King made them all go silent.

He poured the liquid into the golden cup, ensuring none was spilled.

“Drink, sister and enjoy the blessing of our god.”

Cordellia took a sip from the cup he held, and Max sensed the way she vibrated afterward.

“Drink, sister and know our god watches over you.”

Tanila went next and Max would have swore her hair glowed just a little more.

“Drink, fellow dwarf and may Ockrim be proud of the child you are.”

Max smiled as Dagon held the cup to his lips. He took a drink and immediately felt like his body was on fire as the liquid was absorbed before it ran down his throat.

[Blessing of Ockrim Granted - 10% Stat Bonus for 30 days]

Holy dwarf balls!

I’m certain that’s not how it goes yet it seems… fitting. 10% for 30 days… a true gift from a god for a tower climber nearing the end.

“Drink, brother dwarf. Know that I call you a friend and speak of you to our god.”

Fowl sniffed as the cup came close and took a bigger sip, requiring Dagon to pull the cup from his lips.

“Drink, sister dwarf. May our god bless your children and you.”

Batrire’s body trembled as she took the drink.

“They have been blessed! May we celebrate this moment with a song!” Dagon shouted.

Drums began to beat, and a low hum came for a few seconds.

Ockrim, Lord of Forge and Flame,

You bless the blood from which we came.
Your hammer shields, your fire guides,
Through deepest dark where honor bides.

We carve your name in stone and steel,
Our oath is bond, our truth is real.
In halls of gold or fields of strife,
Your strength endures, our shield in life.

O Children bold, let voices ring,
With Ockrim's might in everything!
We march as one, by clan and kin,
Till mountain falls and stars grow dim.

The deep voices of all the dwarves faded, and Max could feel a vibration that seemed to linger in his chest.

“Rise, adventurers, and go forth.”

Max and the other four stood, bowing slightly before moving toward the tower portal behind the King.

As one they stood there, the crowd now silent as each of them glanced at the other. Smiles were present and nods came as they knew a special moment had come.

“No matter what is offered, none of us takes it,” Fowl said quietly. “We conquer this for all of our people and ourselves.”

“Well spoken,” Max said. “Now then, warriors first.”

***

His eyes didn’t need to adjust like they usually did.

One moment, they stood outside the tower; the next, in a vast hall stretching for miles. The ceiling was moving, worlds and stars drifting through the darkness, yet light filled every nook and cranny of the place.

Before them stood a crowd, a horde of creatures of all shapes and sizes, some cloaked and others not.

“What in the gods–”

Fowl stopped as laughter came from the gathered group.

“You have come, and the honor of this moment is ours.”

Max turned to his left and then realized his sonar wasn’t working. Near them was Phaius and Ockrim.

“You five are here and this is a moment for you to celebrate what you have accomplished and hear what is offered,” the human god continued. “Before you stand those who have deemed this moment worthy of their time. Some may seek you out and offer you a chance to be their chosen one. If you are swayed by what they offer, simply say, *‘I accept your terms and pledge my blood,’* while touching, and you will be taken from here to a new world.”

“But if you decide that nothing offered is worthy of giving up the climb, then seek us and we shall send you home,” Ockrim stated. “For now, welcome to the hall of gods and enjoy this moment.”

The dwarven god before them clapped his hands, and a melody of music came from everywhere, just faint enough to hear without being so loud as to overpower the crowd's murmurs.

Both gods moved toward them, smiling and holding out their hands.

“What are they wearing?” Tanila asked.

Max shrugged as he saw the same loose-fitting clothes, almost like a toga. Each one shimmered, and he knew there was power in them.

“Congratulations, my children,” Ockrim said as he motioned to the group. “That includes you, Max Hoste.”

“Hey now, no stealing my people,” Phaius joked.

“Wait, where–”

“She did not come,” Ockrim said, shaking his head at their ranger. “She is… engaged in other activities due to her decisions. Fear not, there are many other elven gods here who are more than willing to offer you far greater things than she ever would.”

Max took the hand that was offered to him by Phaius, and the god leaned in, drawing him close for a quick hug.

“ *Be prepared, steady yourself. You and I know you must push onward.”*

Phaius laughed as if Max had told him some funny joke, and their greeting was over in a moment.

“So now, what?” Fowl asked.

Those words were like someone had pulled the plug on an ale cask and the crowd surged forward, encircling them and all calling out to them.

It was almost an assault to his senses and Max was grateful that his sonar wasn’t working, imagining how bad it would be at this moment.

“Max!”

“Max!”

“Max Hoste!”

Dozens called out his name, and he still heard others calling out to his friends.

A loud snap sounded throughout the hall, and the place went silent.

The initial rush of gods that had been there was gone, and laughter came from the crowd still standing in the spots they had been moments ago.

“What in the–”

“Some forget that you’re not supposed to act in such a way,” Phaius informed them. “Every time it happens. Now, you five may go out as a group or wait, but gods will come and they will court you.”

“Do we have to go?” Max asked.

Ockrim displayed teeth through his well-manicured beard, grinning from ear to ear.

“No. There will be many disappointed beings in the crowd. Some will be possible allies and others will be threats. Right now you could meet them, not sure which category they belong in. Others may dislike your denying of the offer they give,” the dwarven god stated. “In the end, this moment will go on as long as you desire.”

Max felt Tanila squeeze his arm.

“I’m done. What about the rest of you?” she asked.

“Feels like I’m wasting the blessing of my god just standing around here,” Fowl joked. “Besides, ale back home that needs to be drunk.”

“I go where you all go,” Cordellia said.

Max looked at Batrire, who waved a hand at the crowd, which was shifting slightly and growing smaller as it seemed to already know what was about to happen.

“I’m stuck with this guy, so it looks like we’re going home to celebrate.”

Max nodded and turned to the two gods, who stood there, each with a smile and sparkle in their eyes.

“We’re done. We’d like to go back home.”

“Very well,” Ockrim said. “Be safe, adventurers, and good luck on the last trial.”

A sound came and Max felt his sonar go active. Dwarves were moving everywhere.

“What the–”

Someone’s question stoppe,d and then a cacophony of confusion erupted.

“They’re back!”

Max and the others saw Dagon and Velda looking back at them, barely having reached the gate.

“Goblin shite,” Fowl muttered. “This is going to be a long day.”

Links

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[None]

[F8]68/536(1) Chapter 536 - Legendary Crafting

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488795/chapter-536-legendary-crafting; [F8]68/536(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:04,=1 2025-08-05 10:12], [word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:04],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:12], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:12],[this.word2025-08-05 13:55], [publish2025-08-03 16:49],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:49])Chapter 536 - Legendary Crafting - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 536 - Legendary Crafting

“It was just one more day,” Tanila said, rubbing his shoulders. “We can afford one more day. Besides, we weren’t sure how long we’d be on the 99th floor.”

Max nodded and let out the breath he had been holding.

“I know… It’s just my list–”

“Doesn’t have to be done. If you don’t accomplish everything on it, you’ll be fine. No one but you set that hard time frame.”

“But our child,” Max protested. “You can’t tell me you aren’t worried they may come sooner than later.”

She squeezed his traps tight and he laughed as all it did was move his skin a little.

“It’s not fun when you remind me that you don’t feel it.”

“Oh I feel it,” he replied, looking over his shoulder. “I still enjoy you doing it.”

Sliding her arms around his shoulder and neck, Tanila hugged him, kissing his bald head.

“You’re a fool… my fool, but still. Now go. I’ll be fine. Get some of those things on your *important* list done.”

Squeezing her hands, Max kissed her arm, hating that she let go because he had things to do.

“I’m sorry. I promise I’ll make it up to you.”

“Oh you will, don’t you worry. Someone is going to be on night duty for the first year.”

Max chuckled and made his way toward the door.

You know she hasn’t forgotten you don’t need to sleep.

I do… still I find it kind of funny.

***

Rakonath disconnected the last cable and then gave him a thumbs-up.

Flipping the switch, the stolen crystal power device went silent.

“I… I’ve seen you craft multiple times and yet it’s thrilling to watch every time,” his dragon stated. “You are… excited. I can feel it exuding off you.”

Max cracked his neck and grinned, storing the crystal that had dimmed slightly.

“For so long I wanted to be a baker. Then adventuring was my thing and now… getting to work with all these items… I understand how some smiths lose themselves to the craft. I could spend days, weeks here, just trying to make new things if I had the time.”

Max watched as Rakonath picked up the dragon scale armor he had crafted from the scale Wekime had given him.

Part of it had felt weird, using it right now while it appeared the dragon kingdom or race or whatever it was was angry with him.

Still there was no time and he needed to use the skill he had been given from the tower.

“Uh… I know we’ve spoken about equipment before, but this can’t be right,” Rakonath said.

“What do you mean?” Max asked, moving to where the last piece of armor he would make on this world was.

“Look.”

Taking the gold-scaled chest piece from his dragon, Max held it up and inspected it. Five orbs glowed red in an *X* pattern on the front. He had infused them and the entire scale with the core from Bekat. It had shrank quite a bit, the amount of power the scale could seem to absorb almost seemed limitless for a moment

.[Inspect Chest Piece]

*****

Scale of Power - Legendary

• 50% to all Stats

• 25% to all Resists

• 25% to all Damage Dealt

Power Strike - Holds 10 Charges. Takes an hour to recharge each charge. Use of the ability causes 300% bonus damage.

Bonded

*****

Max froze, holding the armor in his hands, feeling them tremble.

“You get it? Right?” Rakonath asked. I mean, if it's bonded, how could I lift it? I almost tried it on, but that wouldn’t have seemed right.”

Even though his dragon was talking, the words didn’t register as Max tried to consider what he had made.

What if I had used this instead for the artifact?

Now, that would have been an item I would have loved to have seen. Still, you didn’t have the ability to create those power orbs. Each one is different from the others, so who is to say it would be greater than your weapon?

Uh… are you ignoring me? How was I able to lift it?

Shaking his head, Max cleared the fog he felt and turned to see Rakonath frowning.

“Sorry… these stats… I was in shock. You’re right, though. Try to put it on.”

As his dragon reached out and grasped the armor, it seemed to hesitate for just a second before coming free of his hands.

Interesting.

Laughter came from Rakonath as he sniffed the chest piece.

“I can smell the power coming off this. Part of me wants to try eating it, but I would prefer not to have that create a rift between us.”

Groaning, Max watched as his dragon stored it, the item vanishing into the dimensional necklace they had given him. Then it appeared on his chest, tight and yet moving with no restrictions. He had used a single fire forge bar, carefully segmenting the scale into unbroken pieces and then lining those segments with it. It had taken almost four days of nonstop work to complete that one task.

“Scaley dragon nuts,” Rakonath cursed. “This feels… unbelievable. I’m… Now I know why you act like you do when equipping your gear.”

Nodding, Max frowned.

“Why… how can you wear it? It’s a good question.”

He should try and transform, see if it stays on him.

How about we give him my other armor instead of that one? I’d rather not test that out on the greatest equipment I’ve ever made.

That is a good test! Let’s trade here, and I’ll go outside and do that right now!

Max retrieved his Black Beetle armor and held it out, waiting for Rakonath to give him the new one.

As they traded, Max didn’t wait. He immediately stored and equipped it, feeling his body flooded with power.

Equip everything and then check.

His dragon stopped moving and turned around, watching as Max equipped all of his gear, including both weapons.

[Simple Total Stat Check]

*****

STR - 10,531

DEX - 9,996

CON - 10,351

INT - 7,735

WIS - 7,724

*****

Even with all those intelligence points, Max blinked multiple times, staring at the information listed for him. His mind understood, but it struggled to comprehend just how to ascertain how strong he was.

Now those are stats worthy of a god. Whatever the tower throws at us, it will not be able to withstand the power we hold.

Max could feel Bob almost oozing satisfaction inside his head or something like that.

Can you share the stats with those of us who can’t read them?

Ahh yeah… Forgive me, Rakonath. Same order as always but they’re 10531, 9,996–

“WHAT?!”

Max leaned back as his dragon shouted that word out loud, flooding the whole room with his voice.

“What do you–

“TEN THOUSAND?! TEN THOUSAND STRENGTH!”

“Rakonath, you’re–

“I KNOW! DO YOU…”

His dragon went silent, stopping his outburst and began to shake his head.

Laughter replaced the yelling, and Max stood there, unsure of the reaction and change that had just occurred.

“Uh… care to share?”

His dragon let out a long sigh and took a deep breath, nodding as he smiled.

“A dragon like Aerthen. She is strong. Very strong. Yet I do not believe she has over 2,500 strength.”

“Four times as much?”

Do not forget the natural defenses granted by higher-tier monsters. While her strength isn’t as high, her size and power from that come into play.

“It doesn’t matter, Bob,” Rakonath declared. “I do not doubt that if he were to attack her and land a single hit, not empowered or anything else, the blow would be devastating.”

“I need to test something also,” Max said, moving quickly and storing the dragon core down to about two-thirds of its original size. “Rakonath, up for traveling with me?”

“Anytime.”

***

“So you’re going to what? Just attack it?”

Max nodded at Rakonath, who was hovering in the air. His silver chest was now adorned with black lines, and the upper section of his body looked almost in shadows.

“Just stay up here. I want to try something.”

“Oh, don’t worry, I’m not getting close.”

You’re sure it's safe to try around here?

We flew in a circle for fifteen miles. Other than animals, none of us saw elves, dwarves, or humans around here.

Nodding, Max pulled both weapons out and jumped off Rakonath’s back.

Let’s do this.

He plummeted like a rock for a bit, and then Bob did his part, using Wind magic to direct them toward the mountain. It was mostly rock, far enough away from where some came to mine.

Out here, no one should get hurt and Max needed to see what he could do.

Transforming both weapons into spears, he smiled as the top of the mountain came close.

[Power Strike]

He thrust his weapons forward, driving himself deep into the immovable object.

The stone gave way, erupting around him as his weapons pierced the side. Bob continued to press the strike, driving Max downward into the stone.

His sonar struggled to keep up with all the pieces that erupted around him and Max unleashed a tornado of air, erupting from around the edges of his body.

Over and over he channeled, driving deeper and deeper until Bob told him to stop.

Enough! We do not want to get buried underneath this. Even though you can travel out from under it, that is not the purpose of this.

His descent stopped and Max kept his eyes shut and didn’t breathe.

Dust was everywhere, and rocks were falling on top of him.

Another tornado of wind blades erupted from around him. Max spun, using the free space to turn back the direction he had come.

Flying upward, his spear shattered whatever stone it struck, the current of air around him grinding others that got close and shoved them aside.

Eventually, the amount of loose stone began to give way and Max could sense a crack forming.

You need to see this…

The tone in Rakonath’s message made him wonder and as he continued upwards, Max began to see the destruction he had caused.

A section of the mountain was gone, and ravines had formed in multiple directions, sending one side of the mountain falling downward.

I did this?

You did.

Still flying higher, Max stopped near where his dragon was. A cloud of dust was rolling across the countryside, and the forest that had been butting up near the mountain's base was now covered in an avalanche of stone.

Almost a third or a fourth of the one side where he had struck was gone for miles.

Finish up the last few items on your list, Max. The time has come.

Nodding, he flew onto his dragon’s back and sat down, still in awe of what kind of power he now possessed.

Do you want me to fly us home, or do you want to travel via your own ability?

“Fly,” Max replied. “I need to think.”

Rakonath turned and started the trip home, and he sat there, trying to wrap his head around what he now possessed.

About ten minutes from the capital, Bob broke the silence they had been in since heading home.

Max, you need to talk to Tanila and tell her what I think you should do.

I’m not sure how I can even begin to broach that subject.

Blame it on me. I do not care. Tell her it's my idea. But you cannot argue with the truth. That is the final step before the tower that remains. Nothing else on this world will help you grow beyond killing Aerthen and hunting down the last of her kind. Even then, the time and effort it takes is too much.

His chest hurt, and he was torn. Bob was right. Only one thing left in this world could make him stronger. The only question was whether he could sacrifice a part of himself to do it.

Links

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[None]

[F8]69/537(1) Chapter 537 - Power vs Values

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488796/chapter-537-power-vs-values; [F8]69/537(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:05,=1 2025-08-05 10:12], [word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:05],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:12], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:13],[this.word2025-08-05 14:09], [publish2025-08-03 16:49],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:49])Chapter 537 - Power vs Values - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 537 - Power vs Values

“So you’re not asking me if you can kill the queen?”

Max shook his head and held up both hands.

“No, absolutely not! I’m simply telling you what *Bob* wanted me to try and get permission to do.”

“Sounds like someone pulled a Fowl,” their warrior muttered. “ *Hey babe, do you mind if I go and kill your mother, you know the one you don’t like? ”*

Max and Tanila both shot him a glare and the dwarf quickly went quiet.

“He’s not wrong,” Cordellia whispered.

“I wasn’t asking for permission to do that, nor am I saying I’m going to do it!” Max exclaimed. “I was simply *saying* what *Bob* wanted me to talk about.”

I feel like I’m being thrown under the cart.

You did tell him to do it, but this still seems like a better technique. He’s sacrificing you to get what he wants.

Please stop, I need to focus!

“Right or not, I can’t order her death like that,” Tanila stated.

“Why not? You were the one who kept him from killing her the first time?” Batrire asked.

Max watched as their mage glared at their healer.

“Don’t get mad at me, I’m just trying to spark conversation. Part of you is upset because you know it has value and merit. The other part is frustrated that you know inside you is a part that is still hurting from her and wouldn’t mind seeing Sylvandra suffer.” Batrire pointed a finger at Tanila and shook her head. “I agree, we don’t want Max to murder anyone and I worry like you do about how this might impact who he is, but we’re nearing the end of our time on this world. What’s left for us to do?”

Both women sat there staring at each other and Max listened to the small voice in his head that came from himself.

“I don’t think he should do it,” Cordellia stated, rising from her chair. She moved to where Max was and held out her hand.

Slowly, Max took it, and all their ranger did was squeeze it.

“The man who saved me didn’t kill because he sought power. I know you’ve done that before, but it was all about me when you rescued me. Did you enjoy it? Probably, but none of that matters. What matters is why you would do it now and it’s all based upon growing stronger.”

Cordellia let go of his hand and knelt before Tanila, putting her hand upon the one that always seemed present on her belly.

“He would do this for you and your child as well as us. If Max were honest, I think he’s scared about what may be inside the tower. For weeks, he’s spent all his time making weapons and armor, ensuring all of us are outfitted for whatever comes. Bob knows that. As much as that skill scared me initially, I realize now that it too cares about us because Max cares for us.

“Maybe it’s the three hundred plus points I got in intelligence, but my heart says no. Don’t do it. At the end of the day, we’ll conquer this tower as we are. A team and not because of one of us sold a part of themselves, hoping that it would be the missing piece to finally take away his fear of losing us.”

Max had to blink a few times, the blurry vision from the tears that had come as their ranger spoke surprised him.

“She’s right,” Fowl muttered. “I’d rather not have you lose anymore of yourself.”

“I’m sorry,” Max whispered. “I… I am afraid. Everything I have cared about for so long is in this room. I… I’ve given everything I have to get where we are and now… I guess I was willing to give a little more.”

Forgive me, Max. I didn’t consider this part of all this, and I shouldn’t have asked you to consider this path.

No… I know you made that decision because you wanted me and my friends to survive. Cordellia is right. You care about all of us.

He sensed others coming close, and soon four bodies surrounded him.

As the group stood there for a moment, Max couldn’t help himself.

“Whoever has their hand there, please move it.”

It was like when he struck that mountain, everyone backed away, looking at each other.

As he laughed, hand gestures came from the three women while Fowl howled with laughter.

“All those intelligence points and still acts like a man,” their ranger muttered.

***

“How many more days?” Tom asked as he stood next to Max, the pair of them watching the training of Faction members by Sulenda.

“She’s good. Almost as good as you,” Max said.

“Yes, she is, now stop dodging the question. How many more days?”

“One. After tomorrow, we’ll enter the tower and tackle the last floor.”

He could feel Tom’s pulse quicken, the vein on the side of his neck throbbing.

“You know I can’t tell you thank you enough times or find any way to express the gratitude I have for you and your team?”

“I do,” Max answered. “That goes the same for us. You gave us a home, trained us and made us better. Without you, I’m fairly certain we wouldn’t be here.”

Scoffing, the older man turned slightly and shook his head.

“Don’t give me that load of goblin shite. We both know you’d still be alive.”

“I might be, but not everyone else. What’s the point of all this if I don’t have someone to fight for?”

Tom grunted and then slapped him on the back.

“You’re smarter than most, Max Hoste. I give you my word, your family and this Faction are always first.”

“I appreciate that. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have somewhere to go.”

As he started to walk away, he felt Tom’s hand grab his shoulder and twist.

“No, I don’t think so, not without a hug first.”

Max didn’t fight it. He pulled in the man who had helped teach him to use his skills and be a better fighter, hugging him in the afternoon light before each of them patted the other's back three times.

“Don’t cry too much,” Max said as he wiped a tear from his eyes. “They might think you’ve gone soft.”

***

Aimee’s squeal filled the shop and she leapt over the counter and slammed into him.

Grunting, she looked up and frowned.

“You’re as soft as a rock? What have you been eatin?”

“Nothing as good as your buns… I mean your dad’s buns… I mean…”

She burst into laughter, and Max joined her after a second, watching as her father came through a door to see what the ruckus was.

“Seth!”

“Max, Dad, Max!”

Waving his hand at his daughter, he took off his apron and held out his hand, smiling as they shook.

“Gods boy you’ve grown! The hero of the Kingdom! Slayer of–”

“Let’s not,” Max said as he motioned to the people in the shop who were starting to get over their shock at his appearance. “Anyways, free for a minute? Or more?”

“Dungeon grinding?” Aimee asked, rubbing her hands together as she smiled.

“One last time. I made this trip just for you two.”

“Then the answer is yes,” Baker Wright replied.

“Tell them you’ll be back in a couple of days,” Max said as he motioned toward the doors.

“A couple of days? Why a couple of days?” Aimee asked.

“Because tomorrow my party is going into the tower to defeat the 100th floor and you two will be outside when I do.”

***

“Tell me, when we first met, could you have defeated me?”

Max shook his head and sipped the ale in his mug.

“No… You were far beyond me. When I saw you standing there, your foot pressed against that troll and it could not fight back, I got a real glimpse at what I wanted to be like. You, Dexic, spurred me on.”

“You know if you want to sleep with me, just ask. I don’t need you to talk sweet to me.”

A spray of ale and foam covered the table as Fowl and Cordellia choked on their drinks.

Max couldn’t help but laugh, summoning a rag and wiping off the spray that had hit him before tossing it to the famous golden warrior.

“If only… somehow, I think my wife might have a problem with that. Besides, according to Fowl, I have a long line of women waiting for their turn.”

More choking took place as Fowl’s face turned red.

“I… I never said those things!”

“Oh how I wish Tanila were here,” Cordellia said. “Nothing like a good fight between women over a man to make you glad you don’t have to deal with that.”

“So it’s true then, you’re involved with Max’s dragon?”

Fowl started to howl and once again choke, still not having caught his breath as their ranger's eyes bulged, her mouth flew open, and no words came out.

“She’s a bit shy about that,” Max pretended to whisper. “Besides, we don’t want to turn this into an adult-only moment. You’re the strongest in the Faction, and I’ve left a gift with Everett for you after we enter the tower.”

“A gift? Beyond all the other items you’ve given me? How in the gods can I ever pay for all of it?”

Max smiled and pulled out a folded piece of paper. Sliding it across the rough table, she took it from him and frowned.

“I’m almost afraid to open this.”

“Just stop being a baby and open it,” Max said, retrieving a bottle of alcohol from his storage.

*****

Dexic,

You’ve shown me what true strength is. It’s willing to die for your Faction and friends. It’s being willing to do the hard things and carry a load that isn’t yours. I will always be grateful for the day you kept me alive, preventing my death when I was stupidly standing outside the Troll dungeon. What you did while I was captive for my party is more than I can ever repay. You helped my family keep moving forward.

Tomorrow, after I leave, Everett will give you something. It’s one of a kind, and I made certain it was your color. Someday, I look forward to when you finish the tower. Until then, be the warrior I know you are. Shine for everyone else to see.

~Max

*****

Tears were rolling off her cheeks and falling onto the paper that trembled in her hands.

She looked up and smiled, soft and real, and just nodded.

He knew words were hard and let her be.

“Tomorrow, be there in the morning. Now, if you’ll forgive me, an old man runs this place I need to see.”

*****

“Why in the gods do you want to meet in here?” Everett asked as he sat down in one of the missing faction chairs. “It feels weird for everyone else but you in this place. Besides… isn’t this one of the missing Faction tables?”

Laughing, Max nodded and pointed at a pair of books on the table.

“I need to step away for an hour or two. There’s plenty of light stones and even something to drink in the cabinet over there. Whatever you do, don’t look at the second book. I can’t talk about it. Now the top one’s blank and yours in case you need it, and a few pencils. Again, don’t look at the second one as I can’t discuss any of what’s inside.”

He winked and saw his Faction leader’s eyes widen, his head snapping to the pair of books and then back at him.

“You–”

“Have to go! Behave! Remember, I’ll be gone for a few hours!”

With that, he shut the door to his dimensional space, trapping Everett inside with a blank journal and the one in which he had written down all his notes about the tower.

Links

//[2025-08-05 14:09]

[None]

[F8]70/538(1) Chapter 538 - Saying Goodbye

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488797/chapter-538-saying-goodbye; [F8]70/538(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:03,=1 2025-08-05 10:12], [word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 13:03],[Wayback_first2025-08-05 10:12], [Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:14],[this.word2025-08-05 14:20], [publish2025-08-03 16:49],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:49])Chapter 538 - Saying Goodbye - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 538 - Saying Goodbye

Max sighed, squeezing his sister’s shoulder as she leaned against him.

“I need to go. Just a few more things left to finish up.”

“Another ten minutes?”

Her voice waivered, and he kissed her hair and nodded.

“For you, yes.”

His feet dangled off the roof of the Faction house. He looked to the east, where the sun’s rays were starting to change the color of the sky. Darkness was beginning to be cast out, and the light of a new day was rising.

There were so many people to say goodbye to. Yesterday had been a whirlwind, running across the capital and the other cities, bringing them here. His friends had requests as well, and it took every skill to get them done, yet Bob had been willing to spend the power needed to reset skills to make it happen.

“When you beat the tower, send me a sign?”

Chuckling, Max nodded and fought against the tightness in his chest.

“Maybe I can convince Phaius to come visit you.”

Stacy sat up, pulling away from him, and stared at him.

“You’re kidding me, right?”

Laughing, he shrugged and then winked at her.

“Maybe, maybe not. We’ll see how it goes. Regardless, you know I need to get going. We’ll see each other one last time. Try not to cry then.”

Her lips scowled as she pushed against him, almost pushing herself off the roof, as he didn’t move an inch.

Grabbing her arm, Max pulled his sister close and hugged her.

“Be the woman you always wanted to be. I know you’ll be a great mother and a warrior.”

Ignoring her sniffles, Max laughed as she shrieked when he scooped her up and jumped off the building.

***

Breakfast was a solemn affair. Everyone ate quietly, and each member of the party focused on what today meant.

Max couldn’t help but think about all the changes they had gone through in the past two years.

Fowl sat there next to Batrire, both of them having already braided their beards. Each had small metal rings set in the braids; gifts from their family for protection and luck.

Cordellia was running her finger down a list she had prepared.

The last few days had been just as busy as she finished setting up things for the group she supported. Outside the city, land had been purchased, and a school of sorts was being built to help train and educate those who needed a new start in life.

His eyes moved to Tanila, who was next to him in her chair, eyes closed. She was softly humming a tune as her hands gently caressed her belly and their child.

This is it, isn’t it?

Yes. Everything you have worked for comes down to what is in that tower. Fear not, I have run through all the tricks and lessons we have learned along this journey. Whatever comes, I will give all we have to ensure you and the others make it through.

Max felt a lump in his throat as Bob spoke.

Thank you. I mean it. I know our journey together started off badly but I know that without you, I’d be dead and so would they.

I… these emotions that spill from you are affecting me. I, too, know that you have changed me into something I cannot remember ever being. Whatever it is I am now, it feels…right. For that, I say thank you as well. It feels like I have a small piece of… humanit,y as you call it.

Sitting there, Max took a deep breath and held it, sensing the hand on the clock about to move.

The large hand ticked to its position, causing the deep bell to ring.

Each of them looked at the other and gave a nod.

“It’s time,” Fowl said, rising from his seat. “Let’s go make history.”

***

The sun was up, its warmth spreading over the city, which rang out with a never-ending din of noise. Bells played all over, and cheers and shouts came from the people lined the streets as they moved along.

Transporting himself and the team to the tower would have been faster, much faster, but Everett had convinced him that this needed to be done.

Flowers lined the city street, and more continued to be thrown as they drew close.

Every race and age was present, each shouting wishes and thanks as they rode in the open carriage toward the tower.

“This is a way bigger turnout than back in Nalgrun,” Fowl pointed out. “I mean… at least three times as many.”

Each waved, smiling as children and adults called out their names.

Thousands of bald heads greeted them along the edge of the street, each shining with a fresh shave.

Max ignored his friends' gentle teasing, laughing when the occasional group of dwarves was gathered together. The only hair they had left was their bushy eyebrows and beards.

Finally, they reached the bridge that carried them to the center of the city, and guards stopped the rest of the town as they moved on to the next part.

Every faction was present, with its members standing silently, a single hand closed and placed against their chest.

None of them wore armor. All were in a simple white robe.

Tears began to fall as Max recognized a few adventurers. Each gave him just a small nod when their eyes locked.

No sound came other than the plodding of the horses and the wheels on the carriage as they rode through the line of adventurers, each a witness to what was happening today.

“My heart feels ready to explode,” Cordellia whispered. “It’s… like a dream.”

Grunts from the rest were her reply as they continued toward the tower, its shape beginning to appear in the center of the town.

The last half mile was a special one as only those from their faction lined both sides of the street. Newer members were first and the older and longer tenured ones followed after.

Many had tears in their eyes as the party moved past them, and Max couldn't hold back his own as he remembered the moments he had trained a few of them.

As they arrived at the gate and climbed out, no one in the cart had a dry eye.

Holding out his hand, Max smiled as Tanila took it and squeezed.

"Just a little more," he whispered as she drew close, wrapping her arm around his.

Max grunted, and Cordellia glanced at him, her eyes landing on the hand he held toward her.

"Get over here," he teased, and she quickly moved, wrapping her arm around his, beaming like the sun.

Five adventurers strode through the gate, a single blast of trumpets sounding as the group passed through.

Birds were released and took off in every direction of the city, a roar rising from behind as the crowds gathered now knew they had entered the tower grounds.

Only a few were inside, special ones hand-picked by Max.

Gasps came as the others saw what Max had done.

Batrire's family stood beside Fowl's family, every dwarf shedding tears.

Next to Fowl's father was his mother, and she cried like the rest, her lips constantly whispering *'I'm sorry'* over and over toward them.

Each dwarf wore a smile, chests proudly puffed out as their children passed by.

Max saw his friends standing on the other side and gave them a nod.

Three adventurers stood there in shock, bodies shaking and Max wasn't sure if they would pass out.

Tom had done what he asked and for that he owed the man more than he could give.

Brutus, Racha, and Miles looked shocked, eyes wide as Max nodded at them.

They had grown and looked worn. Each face bore the mark of someone who had seen death and yet pushed through, staying the course of adventuring.

"Damn nobles."

Max couldn't help but laugh as Brutus whispered those words, everyone around him trying to figure out what was so funny.

Next to those, Aimee and her father held each other, shaking their heads, their cheeks wet like the rest.

Pete was there, dressed in fine clothes and not looking at all like the tavern owner he was.

Next to him was Dick and Linda, having been wisked away to join in this moment with their friends.

His last one to retrieve for this moment was the only one sitting.

A long white beard was carefully braided, and Sam was in the chair, using a staff to try to stand.

“One moment,” Max said, bidding his friends to wait.

Moving quickly, he approached the dwarf and helped him to his feet.

“Bah, now you’re making me look old.”

“It’s not me doing that,” Max joked. “It’s that white beard of yours. Still, I’m glad you came.”

“So am I… so am I. Fear not. I’ve already started writing the story of Max Hoste. For generations, they will know of the boy whose heart was greater than the darkest skill feared by all.”

A sob racked his chest, and Max fought against it with all his strength, simply nodding and giving his older dwarf friend a soft pat on his arm.

“Make sure to embellish it. Tell everyone I had great hair.”

All those who were nearby and heard burst into laughter, and Max flashed a grin before returning to his friend and winking.

Once more, as a group, they walked, side by side, acknowledging the presence of the Faction leaders who had come. They stood there, all in the livery of their Faction, eyes dry and faces set.

Max could sense a few of them trembling, but none broke; their gaze and stature were of stone.

Nine more people stood before them, the last ones in their path before they reached the tower portal.

Tom, Everett, and Dexic stood as one, and Max wanted to scowl as he saw the golden warrior wearing the gift he had made her.

“Did he really give that to her now?” Fowl muttered.

“It appears he did,” Max replied. “Though I guess it seems right.”

The golden warrior stood there, covered in gold dragon armor from head to toe. Only her strong eyes were visible through the slits of the helm, yet Max could see the liquid that dripped from the bottom scale.

She nodded once and Max shrugged when they stood just a few feet away.

“You weren’t supposed to have that yet.”

“You’re a bastard,” Dexic got out, her voice no longer keeping the strong tone she always had. “I… I will see you someday and tell you how high our Faction has risen because of you. Thank you, Max Hoste.”

She held out a gold dragon-scaled hand, and Max grabbed it, yanking the woman forward and giving her a quick embrace.

Sniffing, she stepped back and to the side as the two older men smiled.

“Sorry, I couldn’t wait. A gift like that should be seen by the one who made it,” Everett stated.

“Just another song they’ll sing about you in the coming days,” Tom added. “Max Hoste, the one who turns dragons into armor.”

All of them chuckled as each party member gave hugs and said goodbye.

Waiting for that to end stood an older elf woman whose smile looked like a full moon at night.

“You five,” Alfreda said, breathing to steady herself. “The gods have blessed you. I knew it from the moment you handed me that first bag of ogre testicles.”

Everyone roared with laughter, able to wipe away some tears and stop the flow.

“Be safe, you five. If I ever have children, I will never name them after you.”

Once more, the group laughed as they moved forward, giving Alfreda kisses and hugs before she stepped aside.

With those four gone, they saw the last five remained.

He could feel Tanila stiffen slightly, but she smiled and nodded at her mother.

There, flanked between the two Queens of Peltagow and Dagon and Velda, Sylvandra Gilmenor stood, and for the first time Max could ever remember, she looked tamed.

Though she was dressed, regal in nature, her hair was white, and her eyes were green.

She chose not to flaunt her power or blood. It seems your words moved her after all.

Max mimicked his wife, giving the slightest acknowledgement possible with his head.

She moved first, the Queen of the elves, stepping forward and bowing slightly.

“May the gods watch over you five as you do what has not been done in so long. Know I will keep my promise and do what I can to fix the relationship between our people and the others.”

Tanila let go of his arm and approached her mother

“Sylvandra… mother. In my heart, there is still a small bit of love. Be the mother to our people, I wish you had been to me.”

Having spoken, Tanila returned and took his arm, gold eyes fixed straight ahead.

Once more, a small bow was given, and the elven queen moved to the right.

Dagon and Velda both moved forward, the pair smiling as they walked.

“We’ve done this dance before and I’ve given you the greatest blessing I can,” the King said. “Now, go do what must be done and become what all adventurers dream of.”

Velda said nothing, simply smiling and bending her neck, the pair moving to the left.

Two young Queens moved as one. Both had dyed their hair black and wore gold dresses, which looked out of place, yet Max assumed he knew why they had chosen that color.

“Adventurers, we offer our blessing and thanks. Phaius came and said there was nothing more he could give but his wish to see you soon,” Molly stated. “As for my sister and I… we are grateful for the mercy you have given us. We promise to help our kingdom grow, using you all as the model to mimic.”

Max sighed and nodded.

“Be the women your Father would have wanted you to be,” he replied. “Thank you for keeping your word.”

Both flinched slightly but bowed and then moved to the left, leaving them with no one else in their way.

The portal hummed, its presence calling out to them, and Max felt both women’s grip tighten on his arms.

“I’m ready,” Fowl said. “Warrior’s first.”

Max shook his head and smiled.

“No, this time we go as one.”

Links

//[2025-08-05 14:20]

[None]

[F8]71/539(1) Chapter 539 - An Enemy Appears

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488799/chapter-539-an-enemy-appears;
[F8]71/539(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 14:32,=1 2025-08-05 10:20],
[word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 14:32],[Wayback_first=1 2025-08-05 10:20],
[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:14],[this.word2025-08-05 14:33],
[publish2025-08-03 16:49],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:49])Chapter 539 - An Enemy Appears - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 539 - An Enemy Appears

They arrived as one, and Max let his sonar move out as far as it would, seeking anything nearby.

All of them wore their armor, each ready for combat, having prepared before coming through.

Nothing moved toward them and the air was void of all scent except their own.

When his eyes worked, Max saw they were stretching for miles in a large flat area.

Simple stone, each block purple and similar to the ones in his dimensional space.

There, about a hundred yards away, stood Chromie, feet slightly spread and his hands behind his back.

“Welcome. You have made it, and the final tests await!”

His words washed over them, and Max felt a new power coming from the one who had spoken to them many times.

“The hour has come, and the last test is before you. A fight like nothing you have ever faced before. There is only one way to win: by defeating me.”

Every pore on his body felt electrified, and Max glanced at the others. They were all waiting to see what might happen, their eyes scanning the space around them.

“Fear not. It is only one foe and I shall be it, but it will be against your worst enemy.”

[Final Tower Trial Initiating]

[Scan in Progress]

Max saw the words appear, and he glanced at the others, seeing their eyes move. Each of them was reading what he guessed was the same message as his.

“Are you–”

“Yes,” Tanila said, cutting off Fowl.

[Scan Complete]

[Body Type - Measured]

[Body Type - Exceeds expected Parameters]

[Modifying]

[Equipment - Error]

[Weapon - Unable to Identify]

[Weapon - Replaced]

[Skills - Quantity Exceeds Parameters]

[Skills - Determining Potential Skills]

[Selection Complete]

[Champion Chosen]

Max had one eye on the information that appeared and the other on Chromie.

The being made of reflective metal began to shift and change.

It became like a liquid, twisting and turning, forming into something new, and as it began to finalize its appearance, Max felt his heart stop.

“It’s… Max,” Cordellia whispered.

There before them stood a twenty-five-foot-tall version of him. It wore the same armor as he did, and the only difference Max could tell was the weapon it carried. It wasn’t the artifact Zisathass had made. Instead, it was the one that he and Buwingrid had crafted. It changed shapes a few times, finally stopping on a long sword. Even its shield was the bone one Max held in his hands.

“Are we fighting you?” Fowl asked.

“You are correct, Fowl Hammerfall,” Chromie replied, his voice having not changed. “The real test comes now. You shall face the greatest one in your group. I have a portion of his skills and abilities. We shall begin this final test in one minute, and you shall rise or fall. Prepare yourselves! Know that I do not receive the advantage of your group, but I am one hundred levels higher than Max.”

A snort came from their healer and ranger.

Max’s mind raced with the speed of everything that had to happen. There was no time to argue or discuss. Too many questions were present, and he needed to solve as many as possible immediately.

“Do it,” Tanila said.

Cutting himself with his weapon, Max carried out the first part of his plan.

[Demonic Summoning]

Laughter came from Chromie as the world shifted and the kaleidoscope walls began to form.

The black gate appeared and no time was wasted as it flung open, two shapes standing at it.

“Finally,” Rakonath huffed. “You have no idea how horrible it has been!”

Sog shook his head, a frown appearing as Max’s dragon moved forward, his humanoid form covered in silver dragon armor.

“You say that like I mistreated you. Nothing *bad* happened while you were here.”

“There’s no time,” Max said, stopping the discussion that was going in a direction he didn’t need to go. “Look. That’s what we’re facing.”

Sog and Rakonath grunted, each seeing the larger image of Max a hundred yards away.

“Oh that’s a bastardly move,” the demon said. “I mean, I can respect it, but tell me, is that thing just as strong as you?”

“Let me ask.”

I don’t know. Ever since I saw those notifications, I have tried to dig deeper and gather as much as I can but the system blocked me. I can only assume that your weapon is our greatest trump card. It doesn’t appear that it could copy it. That gives you a boost in stats. Whatever skills it may or may not have, I’m not certain.

So we’re facing a slightly weaker version of myself, yet with an unknown number of abilities? Advice?

Bob was silent for a moment, and a thread of emotion grew. He could feel his skill caring about something.

Trust your allies. You can’t protect them all and must believe they can handle themselves.

This fight isn’t against some creature which just rushes head first and tries to smash its way through whoever pisses it off. Fowl’s taunt might work, and it might not. Every spell it uses will be as if you cast it.

The only way to defeat this is to focus on it as a group.

Let your warrior do what he does best. Absorb damage and protect others.

Trust Cordellia to harass it and cause injury to the boss. She may piss it off more than Fowl and come after her faster than you expect.

Batrire will do what she has done since the time you all grouped. She’ll heal and keep everyone going to the best of her ability.

And Tanila…

Can take care of herself and the others. You know that. She's proven herself time and time again. I think I finally understood what Phaius was trying to warn you about.

Leaving the group?

I'm uncertain, but had you come in here alone and faced this test solo, we could have easily defeated it. Without worrying about the others, I see no path where it could pose a real risk to us. With my reserves and the ability to refresh cooldowns, we could win.

Had your group come in without you, they would have faced one of them, and I am confident they could have defeated that trial without any major problems.

"I'm stronger, faster, and a little bit more powerful," Max informed Sog and Rakonath. "Bob's not sure what skills it might have or how many. Those will all be learned the hard way. You two need to be smart and harass. Don't get close and don't risk yourselves."

The demon laughed and shook his head.

"There you go again, always trying to make sure that I am safe and alive. Forgive me, Max, but this is one fight I will risk everything for you."

"Sog, please–"

"No. I will not. You taught me what friendship is. A concept foreign to my race. We take advantage of friendships, manipulating other races into doing what we want because of their bonds with others. It has always been seen as a weakness, yet you have shown me it is one of the strongest things one can possess."

Sog stepped forward and looked down at him, placing a large black hand on his shoulder.

"You have always looked out for me. Even on the first day you summoned me, you saved my life. Most would have allowed me to die, choosing that moment to escape or strike down their foe. You didn't. Today I shall look out for you, my friend."

He wanted to reply and say the demon was crazy, but Max couldn't. He wouldn't take away what was being offered, not just because he felt he could use the help, but because he understood how much this meant to his friend.

"Then handle yourself and do whatever damage you can. Just know, I'm not weak."

Sog laughed and nodded, pounding his chest with a fist.

"You do realize we have never fought each other. I think you often forget I possess a portion of your power. I know you will win if we fight head to head, but this isn't that kind of fight, is it?"

Smiling, Max nodded.

“Don’t even think about asking me to do the same,” Rakonath announced. “I’ll do my part but I’m not going to sit back or return to his home.”

“Again, it wasn’t that bad, so stop saying it was.”

Max’s dragon shivered, his humanoid form prepped for battle as he stood there.

“I think we have two different definitions of what is acceptable. Now, I’ll focus on pestering from the sky, but I can’t use my fire if you are near him.”

“Just do what you can and be smart.”

Rakonath laughed and smiled.

“Do not worry. I shall not pull a Fowl as you all call it.”

Max sighed and nodded.

“When I end this, we have one minute. I’ll get Batrire to buff Fowl with her big buff and then make for the boss. Anything else?”

“Just thank you,” Sog said as he held out his hand. “Not just for trusting me with your dragon but for everything.”

Max laughed and shook his demon’s hand, ignoring the scowl on Rakonath’s face.

We ready?

We are as best as we can be. Tell Tanila what you want her to do, and trust the rest. No matter what, they are ready for this. You did everything you could to get them this far.

Max chuckled and nodded.

With her bloodline perk, she has an almost two-thousand intelligence stat. Part of me is glad she’s never hit me with a spell yet.

Yet…

Laughing, Max took one more second to see how he stood.

[Status Check]

*****

Max Hoste

19-Year-old Human Male

Level 1

Exp 274/1000

Tower Experience: 99.0%

Base	Bonus	Items	Total
STR: 1865	+8047	+655	10,577

DEX: 1778	+7672	+590	10,040
CON: 1831	+7901	+665	10,397
INT: 1431	+6175	+165	7,771
WIS: 1429	+6166	+165	7,760

Defense of the Dragon - 50%

Defense of the Demon - 50%

Demon Essence: - 1026

World Champion: - 20% Stat Increase

Bloodline: - 90% of the required 100% unlocked

Tower Stat Bonus: - 12.5%

Blessing of Ockrim - 10%

*****

Max nodded, and the door to the demon domain shut. The fractured glass around them began to shatter.

The laughter continued for a moment but was cut off when Chromie saw the appearance of both the demon and Rakonath.

He didn’t bother to wait to see if their opponent would comment on the new arrivals, choosing not to waste any more time.

“Batrire, buff us all with the big buff right at the end. Hit Fowl with your single one. Cordellia use that pet and keeps pestering. Agro here isn’t the same as the other bosses, so go all out but make the shots count. Tanila, you’re free to do whatever you think is best.”

He spun and turned to face his dwarven friend and smiled.

“Time for you to nutt up and be the warrior we both know you are.”

“Bah, that’s a horrible speech if you’re trying to convince me that doppleganger of you isn’t going to kill me.”

Punching his friend's shoulder, Max shook his head.

“You’re not going to die. Use your skills, defend the team, and remember what you did against Sylvandra. Toss in your newest ability and you might outdo me.”

Fowl chuckled, stored his hammer, and punched Max back.

“True. I’m kind of a big deal. Last I heard, they made a few statues of me.”

Groans came, and Max could sense a little of the concern leaving his friends as they focused on what would happen in less than a minute.

“Rakonath, if you would.”

His dragon laughed and nodded, moving a few steps away and began to transform. As he grew, the scales of his father stretched and covered his own. Each one seemed thicker and glossier. Armored ridges formed around both eyes, and his tail now had a small spike on it.

“Holy dragon nuts,” Cordellia muttered. “When did–”

“Later, after we defeat this,” Max said. “Right now, we do this. As a team and as a family.”

Links

//[2025-08-05 14:33]

[None]

[F8]72/540(1) Chapter 540 - Facing Yourself

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488801/chapter-540-facing-yourself; [F8]72/540(1[this.Waybak=1 2025-08-05 10:13],[word.Waybak=1 2025-08-05 10:13],[Wayback_first=1 2025-08-05 10:13],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:14],[this.word2025-08-05 14:48],[publish2025-08-03 16:50], [this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:50])Chapter 540 - Facing Yourself - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Copy of Chapter 540 - Facing Yourself

“I love you,” Max whispered as he nodded at Tanila.

Two seconds remained, and as his mind counted the timer, he didn’t wait.

His overgrown body surged forward, joints and muscles aching, having used Ultimate Form twice, but he knew it was needed.

Chromie mimicked his action, using that same ability and now rose to fifty feet, still twice as tall as he was.

[Haste]

He slammed into the copy of himself, not trying to slice it with his weapons. He tackled his clone while Bob unleashed four different spells upon it.

Flames washed around them, followed by ice as Frost and Fire Nova struck.

Wind blades assaulted his clone’s back, as did a bolt of lightning.

Chromie drove the butt of the bone shield down upon the mirror image he had made and swung its weapon behind himself.

One hit…

Max dodged backwards, the blade growing longer as it came. He held up his sword to deflect the attack and dropped from stealth. Trying to ignore that his mirror image was taken out in a single strike.

It was worth a try.

Even as Bob spoke, Max began to attack, both swords lashing out, his offhand catching the lower part of the boss's shin, drawing silver blood that retracted and healed.

Regeneration!

Neither spoke, not needing to as Max stayed on the offensive, trusting his skill to use everything at their disposal.

Spears of ice began to descend upon them as Tanila unleashed her spell, and Max could see out of the corner of his vision the arrows that Cordellia had sent flying.

Fowl was coming, shouting as he ran, almost making him laugh as the dwarf smashed a potion on his head.

He grew in size, now twelve feet tall, having traded multiple items across different people on the 98th floor to acquire a potion like the ones the goblins had dropped earlier in the tower.

Sog flew at Chromie, two black swords, pulsing with power, ready to strike from behind.

And then the boss was gone, right at the fringe of his sonar, headed toward the three women.

The boss stopped after the first step, spinning on a gold coin, and shouted. Its sword turned into a massive hammer that it brought down at Fowl. It then flashed red and white.

He taunted!

Let him do his job!

Max felt his stomach tighten as he raced toward his friend.

Their warrior flashed three different colors, held his shield above him, and took the strike from a weapon almost six feet wide.

The sound of metal scraping against metal hurt, and the impact of the giant hammer sliding off and crashing into the purple stone left no single mark.

Silver blood squirted from various parts of the boss and then seemed to recall itself midair, like a fountain sending out water and drawing it right back in.

The sound of blow after blow hitting their warrior was a never-ending peal of pain as the cascade of silver blood sprayed out, some falling to the purple floor, unable to be drawn back in.

“BIG HEAL!”

Tanila’s spear ice flew forward as she unleashed it, and Max witnessed the thing double in size as she used her Spell Burst ability.

He reached Chromie as the boss’s weapon turned red repeatedly, trying to smash the dwarf at its feet into the stone.

It’s using the chest piece!

Max flew at the boss, weapons ready, unsure of how this would go but willing to try.

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Ghost Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

His weapons came together, blades aimed at the neck of Chromie.

Each one struck a barrier, just a few yards from the place he had hoped to hit, and those silver eyes of his opponent glared at him.

“IT’S DOWN!” Fowl called out, pain in his voice.

Pain lanced through his body as the shield connected, sending him tumbling backward, his sonar unable to detect the movements in time.

[Regeneration]

Bones knitted together as Max stopped his mid-air somersaults.

A howl echoed across the room and Max saw one of Sog’s black swords buried in the left thigh of Chromie.

His demon friend was tumbling across stone, one arm missing, the other empty-handed.

Each moment was like an eternity. His mind tried to process every attack that anyone made.

Chromie spun, ignoring the warrior at his feet. A cloud of thunder and lightning was forming above his head.

[Cooldowns Reset]

[Haste]

Max streaked through the air, hand out, weapon ready, as he saw the spell forming, knowing what it was.

[Dispel Magic]

[Cooldown Reset]

A single bolt of lightning crashed down, striking the stone where Tanila had been, her body vanishing as she moved from the spot the spell had been aimed at.

She sent her own lightning spell at Chromie, casting Ice Prison on its feet, barely causing the boss more than a second of delay.

But it was all he needed.

His weapons hit against the barrier he knew was present, striking repeatedly, trying to break through it.

Flames began to wash out from his clone and then they were sucked away, all headed right for the dwarf behind it.

[Power Strike]

[Power Strike - Chest]

[Magical Strike]

[Rampage]

He used his ability and one from his chestpiece, sad to know he couldn’t stack more than one from each.

Yet his blade thrummed with power, and the first strike shattered the barrier.

[Dispel Magic]

The second attack sliced into the gold armor on Chromie’s back, and the third sent a wave of silver liquid.

Blades made from air came at him, and Bob raised shields, sending his wind blades to counter them.

Chromie didn’t turn, stomping toward their healer and bringing a foot down on her.

It slammed against a barrier as Max shouted for help.

Beneath him, a dwarf roared, and a wave of power washed upward from below.

Fowl’s hammer struck the foot on the purple stone.

Chromie leaned to the left, off balance as the dwarf struck again, causing the foot to lose its purchase and start to fall.

The shield vanished as a hand came down to catch itself, and Max watched as Fowl ran forward, striking at the outstretched limb with his hammer, drawing blood.

As the liquid flew, shadows wrapped around it, drawing it back toward his hammer.

He’s used it.

Light radiated around their warrior, and Max missed a beat, seeing his friend use everything to save their healer.

Unable to stop himself, Chromie slammed into the stone, rolling onto his back and right in the path of the twelve-foot-tall glowing dwarf, whose roar would make most men run in terror.

“SHE’S MY WIFE!”

Bob moved Max toward the downed boss, having lost himself at the sight of his friend.

A giant boulder fell from the sky at Chromie’s head while oversized arrows rained down upon his torso.

[All Cooldowns Reset]

Like his friend, Max roared.

He was pissed.

The tower had thrown everything it could at them.

Since the beginning, it has forced them to fight harder things, putting their lives at risk.

Now it was making them fight a version of him, and the tide had shifted. They were winning.

His swords sliced at the boss’s chest, the protective barrier gone, sending out torrents of silver blood.

Wind magic assaulted the same spot, causing the liquid to be flung further away.

He could sense that Sog was behind him, still with only one arm, but his blade was cleaving off sections of a leg.

Chromie’s body became like air right before the boulder struck, and their attacks passed through it.

The boss stood, and in the blink of an eye was gone, hobbling as it ran away from the party.

“NOO!” Fowl shouted, chasing after it when Batrire called out.

“Stop you fool!”

Their warrior was still glowing, grunting as he slowed down and returned to where everyone was gathered.

I’m following it. He is healing.

“Now what?” Sog asked, glancing down at the stump that was regrowing.

“It’s healing. We need to be ready.”

“You know I can’t use this ability again,” Fowl stated. “It will wear off and then–”

“I know, just give me a second. Tanila?”

“We were so close but like you it has so many damn abilities. Still, it’s used most of them, which means it should be almost out.”

He sighed and shook his head.

“No… You’re forgetting about one thing.”

All of them groaned as he tapped his boot with a weapon.

“I’m sorry, what do your boots do?” Sog asked.

“Resets all my cooldowns. He can only use it once… but…”

The demon frowned and nodded.

“I’ll be right back, I’m going to retrieve my arm.”

Let me know if Chromie starts to head back this way.

I will. I can engage if you want me to when he does.

Please don’t. This is a team fight. It will take all of us to bring this boss down. Besides, you mean too much to me to let you risk yourself like that.

He could sense the frustration from his dragon at being held back, glad that Rakonath didn’t press the issue any further.

“I’m good on arrows,” Cordellia stated during the silence. “I’ve got about forty-five remaining.”

“How many did you use?” Max asked, ignoring the show of affection between Fowl and Batrire.

“About seventy.”

“Tanila? Mana?”

“It’s coming back fast. I’m close to seventy percent. What about you?”

“Same,” he replied. “That means Chromie will be back to full health and mana when he returns. I don’t think he’ll make the same mistakes twice, which means we’ll have to come up with something different.”

“And we also don’t have my abilities to use again,” Fowl muttered. “So now what?”

He looked around and saw Sog reattaching his arm, tendrils of black reaching out and slowly rejoining.

Everyone was waiting to hear what he would say and Max sighed.

Tell them. The moment has come, and I know what you're thinking is right.

How far out is he?

Five miles now? There is still a never-ending amount of space out here.

"Listen, you all stay here. I'm going to end this," Max said.

"I'm sorry, what?" Fowl gasped. "You're going to leave us and go fight it alone?"

"Yes. We did a great job. You all proved you could do it, but Chromie made a single mistake by running away."

"And what mistake is that?" Cordellia asked. "I mean it wasn't that easy of a fight, and if a few things had gone differently, one or more of us could have died."

"The mistake he made was running away," Tanila stated. "By not being close, we're not in danger. If Max doesn't have to worry about us, he can go all out, not worrying about us getting hurt."

Their rangers eyes were slits and she was frowning.

"Are you saying Max can't die?"

"I can, Cordellia, but not against that. Trust me. I'm stronger, faster, and don't have the limits it does. Regardless, I'm running out of time. Based on how fast my mana is regenerating and knowing how much it spent, I need to go."

"But–"

Holding up a hand, Max stopped her.

"No. I promised you we'd do this. Stay here."

He turned to look at Fowl and nodded.

"Chromie won't make it past me but if he does…"

"I've got them. Go be you. I'll be here pretending to be bored."

Laughing, Max moved quickly, kissed Tanila on her cheek, and rubbed her belly.

"Daddy will be back soon. Be a good little girl for mommy."

Tanila's eyes flew open, and everyone gasped as Max laughed, turning to run in the direction he knew Rakonath was.

"MAX HOSTE! YOU BETTER NOT DIE BECAUSE I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!"

[Haste]

His laughter rang out across the tower floor as he raced toward a cheap imitation of himself.

Links

//[2025-08-05 14:48]

[None]

[F8]73/541(1) Chapter 541 - A Mistake Made

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488803/chapter-541-a-mistake-made; [F8]73/541(1[this.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 15:04,=1.2 2025-08-05 10:14,=1.1 2025-08-04 12:14],[word.Waybak=2.1 2025-08-05 15:04],[Wayback_first=1.1 2025-08-04 12:14],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:14],[this.word2025-08-05 15:04],[publish2025-08-03 16:50],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:50])Chapter 541 - A Mistake Made - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

Chapter 541 - A Mistake Made

Max never stopped laughing as he cut an arm off and then stored it.

Chromie roared in anger, unable to get any distance from him, and Max's overwhelming power foiled every attempt to attack or defend.

"It was a good choice, copying me, but you screwed up and you know it," Max shouted, removing the legs that were regrowing with another set of strikes and storing them with the others.

"You're going to run out of mana eventually, and when you do, this is really going to hurt! Now tell me what I want to know. Have the other black skills already beaten the tower?!"

Silver blood flowed like a river, running in every direction, never able to return from whence it came.

All that remained of Chromie now was a head and torso, the rest being hacked off every second.

"I… can't! The system will kill me!"

Max laughed and nodded at Rakonath.

"Again."

His dragon took a deep breath. A moment later, flames erupted from his mouth, washing over Chromie and Max, only one of them suffering damage.

This was a nice perk to learn about… not getting hurt by my dragon's flames is pretty crazy.

I'm just glad it worked out. That first time, I got a little carried away.

Focus. He'll talk. Give him time.

Max stood there as flames burned away the flesh of his opponent.

He assumed Chromie had learned not to cry out as the fire washed over him, the pain of it entering his lungs having most likely been a horrendous experience.

Seconds passed, and as the flames died down, Max struck the burnt face with the flat of his blade.

"All I need is the truth, and then this can be over. Have they made it past the tower?"

Groaning and moans came, yet the one sent of face him said nothing, only managing to move his head up and down once.

Chromie's whole body began to shake and tremble.

Now!

Max moved with purpose, his weapon transforming to a cleaver.

[Berserker]

[Power Strike]

[Power Strike]

[Magical Strike]

[Quick Attack]

[Rampage]

His weapon was just a solid line of light, three streaks in his vision. With the power of two Ultimate Forms and everything else, the top three-fourths of Chromie's head was sliced like an orange. He made an *X* and then a straight line across at the bottom of it, sending pieces tumbling to the purple stones below.

Max's body shook, and the weapon almost flew from his hand as a cold like the time he had barely escaped Savantus's domain wracked his body and soul.

He couldn't breathe, couldn't see.

Everything felt like it was shutting down and the pain of it all was too much.

"Max!"

He knew Rakonath had called out his name but the darkness overtook him.

***

Floating in the void, Max blinked, seeing a reflection of himself, eyes not as dark as before, looking back at him and smiling.

“It is about time you woke up.”

Grabbing his head, Max felt himself suddenly upright, his feet against something.

Blinking, he looked down, seeing a small, white, round disc against his feet.

“What in the gods?”

“They had nothing to do with it, Max. It is all me,” Bob stated. “Now listen. Time is short, and I know you will wake up as that dragon of yours has carried you to your friends.”

“What?”

His image snapped his fingers and Max felt his mind erupt with knowledge and understanding.

“I… we…”

“Yes. We won and you gained something we should not have gained. The system tried to take it but I was able to hold back some of it. Those systems you see in your mind. Thousands of planets. Somewhere in each of them is the other two skills.”

“And what does that mean?”

“For now? Nothing beyond knowing they are both further ahead of us. Some walls within my mind have come down and I can remember some of this. What comes next will be different than anything we are ready for. This journey is not over. It has only begun.”

Max frowned as he looked back and forth at the images of planets, suns, and stars swirling around him in the darkness of space.

“I thought we were done? I mean, I knew the tower meant more but… again? What about my friends?”

“All that will be revealed soon. Now listen, Max, listen carefully.”

Bob leaned forward, the mischievous smile his skill had worn so many times in this space was back.

“They were foolish to make that one our opponent. It would have been better to send another creature or simply allow us to pass. I cannot think it was a coincidence but still they gave me something they shouldn’t have.”

Bob snapped his fingers and a small blue light appeared above them.

“This is a piece of the system. I consumed it. It will serve as the piece that will guide and help us in what comes next.”

His brain understood some of what he could see and comprehend in Bob’s mind. Yet some of it was still foreign and made no sense.

“So now what?” Max asked.

“Wake up. Claim the rewards and let us see what the tower does next.”

***

“He’s awake!”

Max groaned as Cordellia shouted in his left ear.

“Max! You… fool.”

He felt Tanila’s head touch his and moved his arm, gently grabbing the back of her neck and holding her close.

“I’m a man, we’re all fools.”

Chuckles came and when he let go of her neck, she sat up, tears having stained her face.

“You did it,” Fowl stated, holding a hand out. “I knew you could.”

Nodding, Max took a second to ensure he was fine and accepted the help, letting their warrior yank him to his feet.

Once he was upright, the four of them all pressed against him, arms wrapping around.

Soon, two more sets of arms encircled them, and Max began to laugh.

“Is this the wrong thing to do?” Sog asked, starting to pull back.

“Only if your hand goes somewhere it’s not supposed to,” he replied.

***

He looked at the portal near the group. It was white and pure, pulsing and waiting for them to enter.

“Eventually, we have to take it,” Batrire said. “What’s your plan?”

“Dimensional space doesn’t work and Sog doesn’t think he can take Rakonath back with him.

“Please don’t let him do that. I can’t take it again!”

The demon chuckled and raised his skin above his eyes.

“You’re such a softie.”

Max felt Tanila squeeze his hand and focused on her.

“You know, I’m still mad at you about what you did.”

“But you and the others forgot about what I was doing, right?”

She snorted and nodded.

“It doesn’t mean I won’t make you suffer.”

Max shrugged. “Won’t be the first and definitely won’t be the last time either.”

Once more he glanced at the notifications he had read at least four times.

[Consume has Consumed a System Emmisary]

[Error - System…]

[Error]

[Consume has locked System Core]

[Fourteen Skills Consumed]

[All Skill are of Equal Rank]

[Power Stored for Future Use]

[Unique Blood Type Consumed]

[Adjusting]

[Bloodline Unlocked - 100%]

[Bloodline Evolving]

[…]

[…]

[Unique Bloodline Created]

[Awaiting System’s Acceptance]

[Bloodline Accepted]

[Bloodline - Unique - Bloodline of the Consumer]

[Bonus’s Determined]

[50% Bonus to All Stats]

[20% Bonus to Hit Points]

[20% Bonus to Resistances]

[10% Bonus to System Gains]

[Stat Milestone 3 Reached]

[Strength of 1000 acquired]

[Dexterity of 1000 acquired]

[Constitution of 1000 acquired]

[Intelligence of 1000 acquired]

[Wisdom of 1000 acquired]

[Bloodline Acquired - Evolution Possible. Rest Needed to Evolve]

“Hey, did you hear me?”

Max nodded at Fowl. “It’s a good idea. Let’s see if it works. Otherwise, we’ll have to wait here for two days.”

They all moved slowly to the portal, and Rakonath took a deep breath, reached out with his hand, and touched it.

He shimmered for a moment and then was gone.

“Uh… that’s good? Right?” Fowl asked.

“Gods, I hope so,” Cordellia replied. “I can’t imagine life without him.”

Batrire choked and their ranger’s face went red.

“That explains so much now,” Sog stated. “He was against all the efforts my minions made to woo him. It appears he has a mate already.”

A shriek came and their ranger raced to the portal, touching it with her hand and vanishing as Rakonath had.

Fowl roared with laughter and moved to the demon, giving him a solid thump on the leg.

“One day we need to sit down and drink. I owe you one after that.”

Sog nodded slowly and looked at Max.

“It’s fine,” he mouthed, and the demon shrugged.

“I guess it’s time for me to see what happens.”

Max watched as his demonic friend touched the portal, shimmering like his dragon, and vanished.

“I guess we'd better hurry up and get over there,” Tanila said as she pulled him toward the portal. “I can only imagine what Sog will say to try and embarrass our ranger.”

They all laughed as they moved to the portal, touching it simultaneously.

***

Five figures sat before them, each different in size and shape. Yet they all had cords of lights flowing from the tops of their heads and out of the bottoms of the chairs they sat in.

“A demon, dwarf, ranger, human, and a dragonkin all in a room… this feels like a bad joke,” Fowl said.

“Be silent and listen,” the dwarf said, his voice echoing in their mind. “You have passed the towers and are now worthy of what comes next. Some of you have sidestepped the guidelines and do not belong here, yet we are bound by the rules which govern us all and must honor them.”

“Rakonath and Sog’thollech,” the demon woman in the chair called out. “You two arrived here by means which are… unusual. Still, you share a thread with the one called Max Hoste. Choose now if you will stay bound to him or if you would prefer to be released from that bond, able to be free and try to rise in the ranks of the Divine.”

Both dragon and demon stood there, looking at ech other and then at Max.

“What does that mean?” Rakonath asked. “Would I still be allowed to travel with him?”

“No,” the dragonkin replied. “To sever the cord means you would be on your own. Alliances could change if you desired.”

“And if I stay connected?”

“Then you would be bound to him forever. You could never rise above him and would only be able to be his equal.”

“I am fine with that,” Rakonath replied. “I choose to stay bound to him.”

The dragonkin snapped, and Max felt his entire being pulse. A moment later, the thread that had connected him to Rakonath strengthened.

[Bond Evolved]

Max blinked as those words flashed before his eyes.

[Bond]

*****

You are bonded with Rakonath.

Rank 1 of Bond Unlocked: Rakonath gains 20% of your stats.

Rank 2 of Bond Unlocked: You may now communicate with your thoughts alone.

Rank 3 of Bond Unlocked: You are bound for eternity. All gains are shared between the dragon and the rider. 50% of stats are shared between the rider and the dragon.

Know that Wekime is watching.

*****

Max felt his body tingle, power flowing through him. He saw his dragon taking deep breaths, also trying to handle the sudden influx of stats.

Interesting. You gain half of his. This can be… advantageous.

Sog stood there, frowning and tapped his chin with a claw.

“You know I am a demon, bound to come when Max summons me. I pledged my soul to him. What does it gain me to sever that thread?”

“You could free yourself from the god you serve,” the demoness replied. “From that moment on, you could try to rise to his power and even challenge him one day.”

The room went silent as everyone waited for him to reply. Finally, he began to nod his head.

“I’ll keep the thread. I gave an oath and Max is my friend.”

All five sitting on the chairs looked at one another and then the human one nodded.

The demoness snapped her fingers and Max felt his skin begin to give off waves of heat. His muscles felt heavier and ready to burst through the outer layer that kept them hidden.

Sog roared as he fell to a knee, panting repeatedly before he could rise again.

“Did he just get taller?” Fowl whispered.

“Quiet!” the dwarf called out. “Now that those things have been resolved, we come to the moment when everything changes. You… seven–”

“Wait!” the elf cried out, her face showing the first hint of any kind of emotion since they had arrived.

All of them looked at her, their faces contorting for a few seconds before returning to the black expressions they had worn before.

“Eight are here. Seven may rule. One must grow and show us what they will become,” the dwarf said. “Now, come. Time is not infinite in this room. Gods are waiting to seek our aid and you seven must now walk a new path. Your mortal bodies are gone. Each of you will be remade. Prepare yourself as you achieve the Divine.”

Max pulled Tanila closer as she looked at him, her hand holding her belly.

A gem the size of an adult rose up before them, seemingly coming from nowhere but the black floor.

That’s… a shard.

Or what the shards come from.

“Touch it,” the elf said. “It will measure you. It will determine your power in what comes next. Each shall be granted a world of their own. You may take another with you and combine that power if you wish. If you all choose to go together, know that you may but that will make your world a target when the safety of the tutorial ends.”

“The tutorial?” Max asked, ignoring the glare he was given.

“It would be unwise to give you so much power and then throw you to… the wolves as you say. Many will seek to devour you. You, Max Hoste, bear a title that you should not have yet and somehow you do. There will be many who challenge you for

your world. Just know they are like you. On the lowest rung of the Divine. A Champion.”

“I thought we could become gods,” Batrire said.

“In time,” the dwarf replied. “For now, you will be Champions. Grow strong enough; the next rung on the ladder is a Demi-God. From there… the real power and games begin.”

Max realized he didn’t have sonar, seeing movement to his side.

“If you two will have me, I want to stay with you,” Cordellia whispered.

Tanila smiled and nodded. “We’d be honored to have you.”

“Gods… er I mean… uh.. Yeah,” Fowl cleared his throat and snorted. “I’m happy to stay with you all. We all know I’m not good at figuring things out.”

Laughter came from everyone but the five sitting on chairs.

“I’m with this hairy fool,” Batrire said as she drew close.

“Rakonath? Sog?”

“You five would have me?” the demon asked. “You do realize I enjoy things that are a bit… darker?”

“You’ll be fine,” Rakonath said. “So does Cordellia.”

Links

//[2025-08-05 15:04]

[None]

[F8]74/542(1) Chapter 542 - Epilogue

[F8]1)https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/76259/ultimate-level-1-litrpg-book-9-stubs-87-book-10/chapter/2488804/chapter-542-epilogue; [F8]74/542(1[this.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 15:05,=1.2 2025-08-05 10:14,=1.1del 2025-08-04 12:15],[word.Waybak=2 2025-08-05 15:05],[Wayback_first=1.1del 2025-08-04 12:15],[Waybak_Last],[this.Fav2025-08-04 12:14],[this.word2025-08-05 15:23],[publish2025-08-03 16:50],[this.Last_edit2025-08-03 16:53])Chapter 542 - Epilogue - Ultimate Level 1 LitRPG - Book 9 STUBS 8/7!! Book 10 Starts 2 weeks after! | Royal Road

A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

This is the last chapter of book 9!

So 'concludes' the first 'arc' of the stories. We'll pick up in book 10 and this is the teaser of what is to come.

Don't forget if you haven't check this out yet, here is my Webtoon - Ultimate Level 1[L1]

As always, I'm grateful for each of you who have followed me so far on this journey and hope you like what comes next!

Chapter 542 – Epilogue

Max watched as Tanila vanished.

Her aura was only slightly less than Rakonath's. Does that mean he is stronger than her?

Only time will tell but if he grows as you do and vice versa, the two of you will quickly become a force to fear. Even more so is the thread that connects you with Sog. He is a wild card in my opinion, yet the demon seems content to throw his lot in with you.

He nodded and closed his eyes.

The thread that connected him to Rakonath was barely there right now. His dragon's presence felt so far away that it took effort to find it.

"Your time has come, Max Hoste. Touch the crystal and be measured."

He nodded at the dwarf as she spoke.

Glancing at the human male who still had not spoken, he felt eyes peering into his soul.

Worry not. This next part is something I am anxious about.

Because?

You shall see.

Taking a deep breath, Max stood before the clear shard. Two years ago, a much smaller version of this had sent his life down a path he never wanted or expected. Now he couldn't imagine his life without Bob.

His fingers brushed up against the crystal, and unable to fight it, his whole hand was pulled against it.

Waves of force assaulted him through his arm, trying to beat down whatever walls he had erected around him.

[Divine System Initiated]

[Scanning Champion - Max Hoste]

Light exploded before his eyes, and thousands of galaxies and other systems flew past his vision.

Each beat of his heart felt like someone was pounding a hammer against metal on an anvil and breathing was like trying to lift a mountain.

I have this.

[System has detected abnormalities]

[Being possesses stats beyond expected limitations]

[Being possesses more skills than the current system allows]

[Multiple System skills present]

[World Champion Advanced Skills present]

[Total Item value beyond accepted limits for the system]

[Unidentified Weapon present]

[Unique Bloodline present]

[Error]

[Entity - Max Hoste is infected]

[Black Skill Detected]

[Evolved form of Consume Detected]

[Consume Skill - Abnormality Detected]

[System Error - Consume Interfering with Assessment]

[…]

[…]

[Watcher Presence Detected]

[Divine System Overridden]

[Champion - Max Hoste - Assessment Paused]

It took great effort to open his eyelids just enough to see what was before him.

The crystal was blacker than black, drawing all light in the room toward it. Every Watcher but one was sitting in their chairs, eyes closed, gripping the armrests so fiercely he was certain they would break.

Yet the one in the middle, the human Watcher, had his eyes open.

Staring at them felt like looking at the sun, power radiating and illuminating his perfect skin.

Yet through it all, Max saw what he believed was a corner of his mouth turned upward.

Pain erupted in his mind and his eyes clamped shut.

[Assessment Resumed]

[Champion Status Re-Initiated]

[Being has a total power that exceeds the current Divine Tier]

[Attempting to –]

[Interference Deteced]

[Watcher Presence Detected]

[Rule Set Overridden]

[Log Created]

[Consume has Consumed Log]

[Champion - Max Hoste Registered]

[Skills Available for Selection]

[Proceed to Starter World]

[Yes / No]

Max willed to select yes, yet his mind seemed unable to work. Something or someone had him frozen.

And then the choice was made.

[Transporting to Starter World]

I… did it…

Did what?!

No reply came from Bob other than a laughter that resonated within his entire being as a sensation of warmth filled him.

His pain vanished as a gentle breeze blew against his face.

“Max.”

Blinking, he realized his eyes worked, and Tanila and the rest of his friends stood before him.

Near them was a small shard, and glancing down, Max saw a vast ocean below.

“What… where are we? Are we flying?”

“Home,” she replied. “Our new home. Come, let’s design a world that our child… our daughter will grow up on.”

She grabbed his hand, dragging him toward the crystal.

Bob… what did you do?

I left a surprise for the Watchers and took a pound of flesh from the one who imprisoned me. For now, do not worry.

Welcome to your new life, Max.

Congratulations on becoming a god.

Stay tuned for the next arc in the Ultimate Level 1 Series

Links

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[L1] https://www.webtoons.com/en/canvas/ultimate-level-1/list?title_no=1059077

B9 END [title] ch474-542

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A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

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A NOTE FROM DADS BEDTIME STORIES

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